No. 792
Friday
24 April '92

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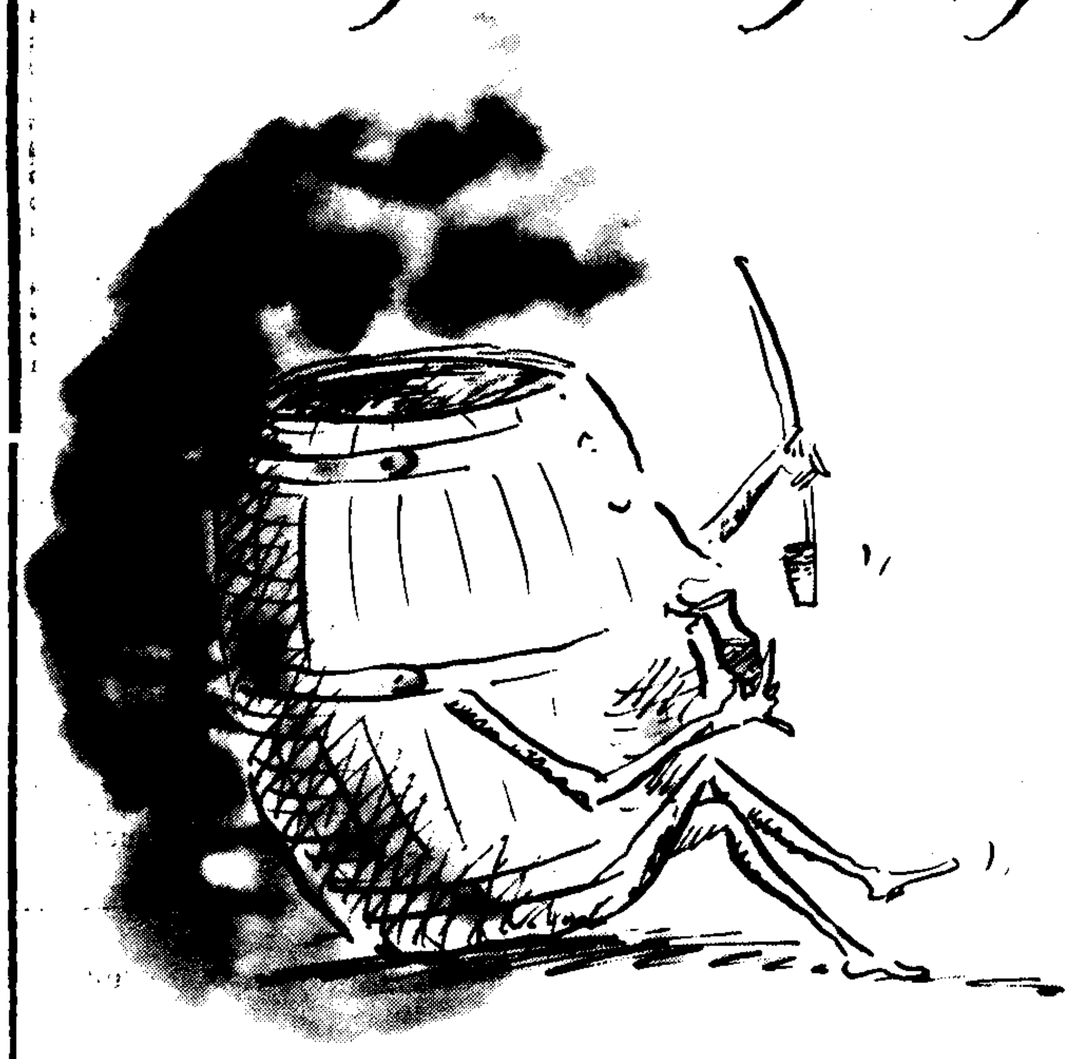

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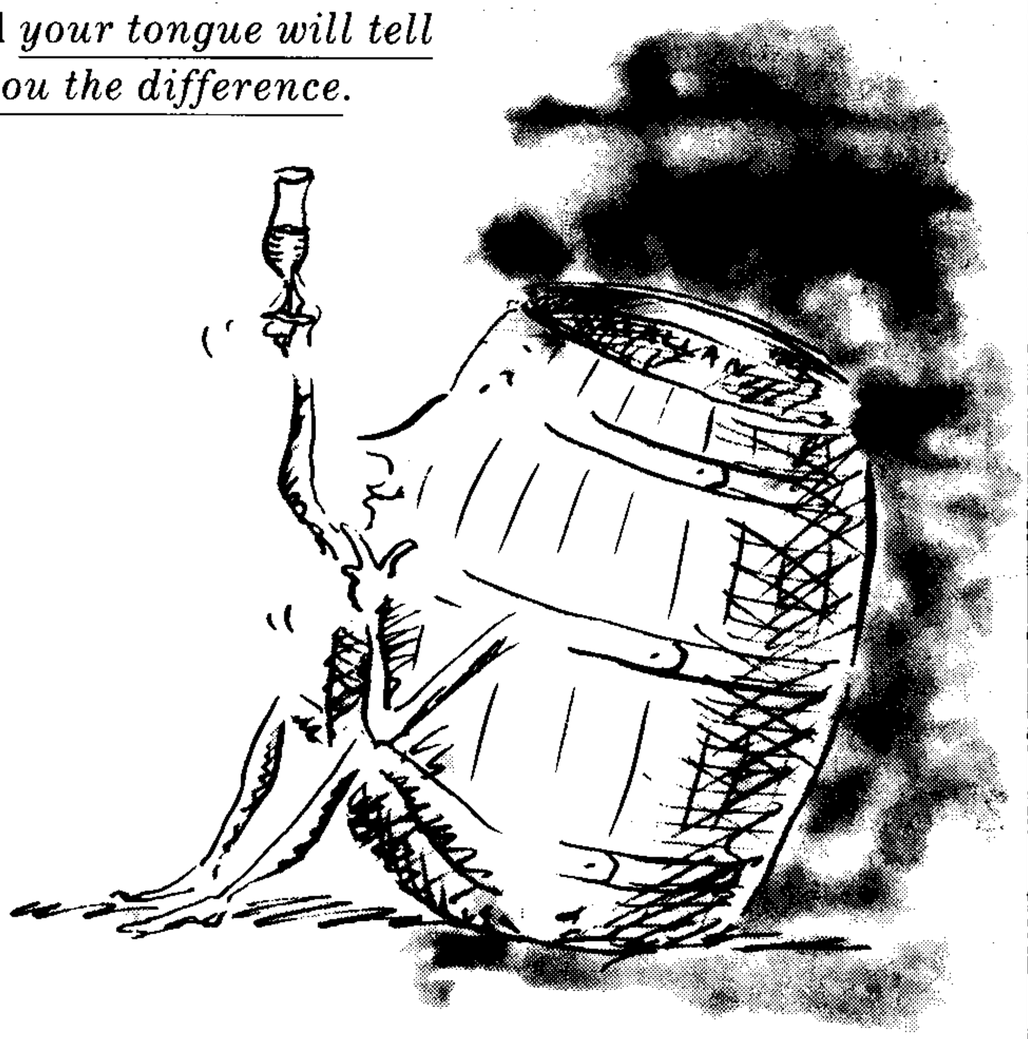

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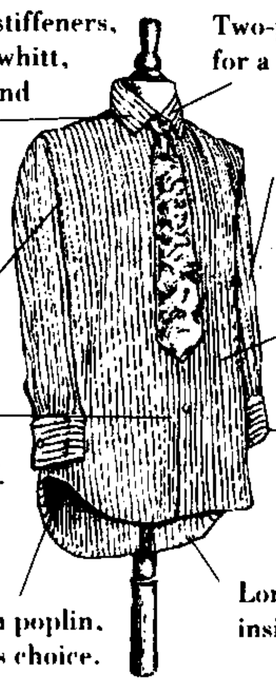
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Gnome

THERE WILL be no gloating in this newspaper over the spectacular triumph of John Major and the dismal failure of Neil Kinnock in the recent election.

No, a healthy democracy requires an effective opposition, not merely a strong and sensible government. This paper has long argued that the old Labour Party must reform itself in order to become the vital alternative voice of British politics.

It has gone some way towards achieving the necessary change but there is still a great distance to go.

Here, simply, is what it must do:

- Drop all of its current policies.
- Adopt all the policies of the Tories.
- Change its name to something more popular, like "The Conservative Party".
- Adopt a tough new leader such as Mrs Margaret Thatcher.

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COLOUR SECTION

HYPOCRISY and humbug shine through the imposition of sanctions against Libya like a light unto nations.

With French and American collaboration, the sanctions are supposed to bring Libya to her knees and force the release of the two intelligence operatives the United States and Britain now claim were responsible for the Lockerbie bombing. But why don't the Gulf allies start a little closer to home?

They could, for example, ask the Libyans to withdraw their finance from the Channel tunnel? Surely this would show the deep displeasure and revulsion felt by the British and French governments at Colonel Gadaffi's harbouring of the two wanted men?

Then, of course, the French could suspend their shipments of aircraft and other military spares from Bordeaux airport (see *Eyes passim*), or perhaps announce the cancellation of the servicing of Libyan Arab Airlines jets at a cost of some 250 million French francs per year.

Meanwhile the Libyan spotlight has fallen on none other than the *Eye*'s old friend Tiny Rowland. As Tiny the Peacemaker he is now shuttling between Nairobi and Tripoli with Mark Thatcher's business friend, Daniel Arap Too, the illegitimate son of Kenyan president Daniel Arap Moi, holding secret meetings with Gadaffi.

No doubt the meetings are an attempt to bring about a ceasefire in the Sudan. But others have wickedly cast aspersions on the altruism of Mr Rowland and make more malicious suggestions. They claim that when Lonrho sold some £177 million worth of its Metropol hotels group to the Libyans, the real price should have been closer to £90 million. Adnan Khashoggi has been running around London and Geneva bragging about the sale, but someone may have forgotten to read the small print. It seems the deal was subject to the approval of the Libyan Reserve Bank, and spiteful rumours suggest approval has not yet been forthcoming.

THANK YOU for all the anonymous letters from British Aerospace well-wishers complaining about the *Eye* piece in the last issue on the supergun. They are all quick to assert that David Hastie, former BAe high-flier, was "sacked" long before the Baghdad arms fair in 1989.

Well, the source for the *Eye*'s allegation about Hastie is the ministry of defence, whose representatives told the trade and industry select committee into the supergun affair that Hastie had been "seconded" to the ministry from "his employers, British Aerospace" when he went to Baghdad for the ministry in 1989; and that he was "seconded" back again to BAe when he went to the arms fair in February of that year.

Quite why so many people want to forget this association is not clear. But at least the correspondence has helped us to discover where Mr Hastie is now: he is marketing director at the arms manufacturers, Vickers.

Vickers was mentioned in the *Independent*'s exclusive revelations about bribes allegations made by a former Lt Col Thomas Dooley in a lawsuit in the United States. Dooley claims he was demoted as soon as he threatened to blow the whistle on the way in which certain arms deals were being clinched. Among those mentioned in court documents, the *Independent* revealed, was Sir Colin Chandler, former head of defence export services at the ministry of defence and now chief executive of Vickers.

AS BARBARA Mills takes over as director of public prosecutions, she is still trying to contain the fall-out from an embarrassing incident towards the end of the year-long Blue Arrow trial.

While the jury was out, Mrs Mills held an unprecedented off-the-record press briefing for a small group of journalists. In an effort to deflect some of the criticism that was being directed at her Serious Fraud Office (SFO), Mrs Mills urged the hacks to focus on the role of the trial judge, Mr Justice McKinnon. She blamed him for allowing the trial to take so long.

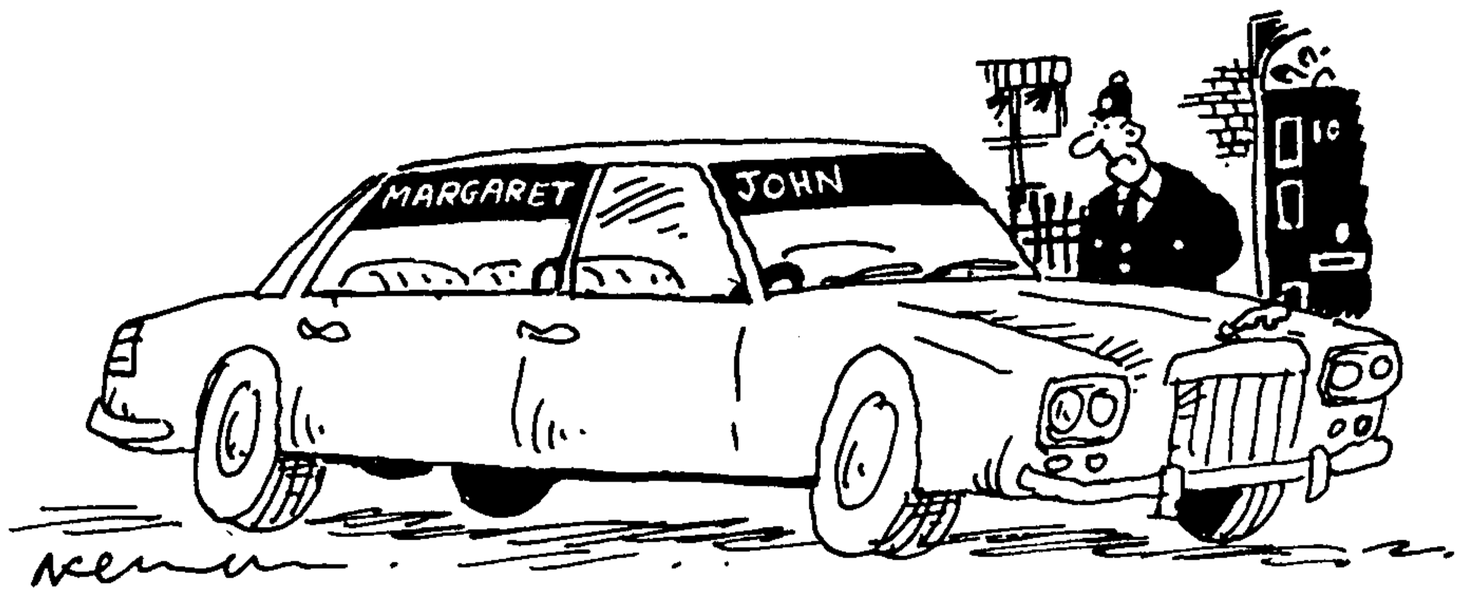
The next day, which was the third day of the jury's deliberation, this non-attributable opinion appeared in several newspapers. The *Independent*'s report was the most explicit, crediting the opinion to a senior legal source: "In the case of Blue Arrow, more than 30 per cent of the time has been taken up by legal arguments. Much of this would have been avoided if Mr Justice McKinnon, the trial judge, had held a more thorough and ordered preparatory hearing beforehand, it is alleged."

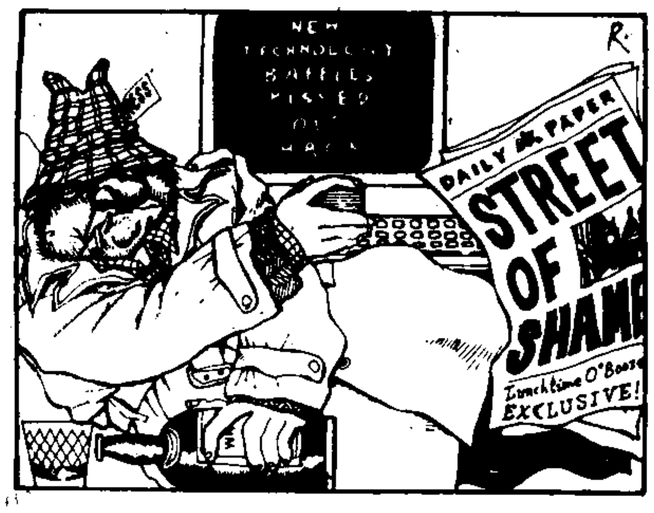
The problem was that the name of the source got out. *The Lawyer*, a legal trade magazine which did not have one of its journalists at the briefing and did not therefore consider itself bound by any obligation to the source, revealed that Mrs Mills was behind the criticism of the judge. For her part Mrs Mills, who will have to cultivate good relations with members of the judiciary in her new job, has complained to the Press Complaints Commission.

Of course there is absolutely no connection between Mrs Mills's criticism of Mr Justice McKinnon and the fact that he summed up to the jury in favour of acquittals.

It will also be interesting to see the PCC's verdict. Will it agree that matters of public interest concerning fraud trials can only be aired at non-attributable briefings and that if they go on the record the press should be hammered? Watch this space.

● *See 'IN THE CITY' – p. 29.*





TORY-supporting tabloids were more than usually dishonest when they huffed and puffed indignantly at Neil Kinnock's claim that their bias had helped to swing the election.

There was "not a word of truth" in the allegation, said the *Sun*. "It is flattering for him to suggest we have so much power. Like so much else he says, it is also untrue." This was echoed by the *Mail* and *Express*.

How odd, then, that only a few days earlier, on 11 April, the *Sun*'s front page story — under the headline IT'S THE SUN WOT WON IT — had boasted that "Triumphant MPs were queueing yesterday to say 'Thank You My *Sun*' for helping John Major back in to Number 10."

And in the early hours of 10 April, as the Tory victory was confirmed, Sir Nick and Lady Lloyd (of the *Daily* and *Sunday Express*) were seen arriving at Conservative Central Office to receive John Major's personal thanks for saving his skin. They were joined shortly afterwards by Sir David English and his chief hatchet-man from the *Mail*, ex-Trotskyist Roger Rosewell, to whom Major paid similarly effusive tribute.

All these hacks seemed happy enough at the time to take the credit for the Tories' success. Why are they now so modest about it?

HACKS at Mirror Group Newspapers are waiting anxiously to hear about the future of their titles and wondering what has happened to the much-trumpeted managment buyout.

Of course it isn't really a *management* buyout at all, since the only member of the old management who is part of the team is the vindictive and paranoid Joe Haines, who should be ashamed to show his face in the building.

However the team of senior editorial personnel under the leadership of *Daily Mirror* editor Richard Stott appears to be falling apart. Bridget Rowe, editor of the *Sunday Mirror*, wants to know why there have been secret meetings, to which she has not been invited, at the Ealing home of Mike Molloy, a former editor of the *Daily Mirror.*

LADY Eve Pollard, editrix of the *Sunday Express*, was in most generous mood after the general election.

La Bollard ordered champagne to celebrate the Tory victory and even shared it with her lowly hacks. What she did not share with her hacks were the press tickets to Eurodisney in France. Three arrived and were quickly snaffled by la Bollard for herself and her kids...

MIDWAY through election night, TV's Charles Moore, deputy editor of *The Daily Torygraph*, decided to phone through his version of the Conrad Black celebrations to his paper's over-harassed newsdesk.

Put through to Richard Savill, Moore was indignant when the hack suggested he dictate his copy to the copy-takers. Instead, a somewhat squiffy Moore insisted that Savill take it down himself.

The deputy editor started to recite, but when he reached a reference to Carol Thatcher, Savill asked whether Carol was spelt with an "e".

"I don't know," said Moore.

"Well, would you mind asking her?" Savill asked.

"Yes, I would," retorted Moore. "You can get the library to check it."

A moment later, when Moore used the word "effervesced", Savill asked him if he could spell it for him, since he had not heard the word before.

"Are you illiterate?" inquired Moore tetchily.

When the Old Etonian had finished dictating his peerless prose, he put on his best junior prefect voice and assured Savill that his shortcomings would be drawn to the attention of the editor, Max "Hitler" Hastings.

***GRAUNIAD* arts editor Jocelyn "Miss" Targett has stirred up a hornets' nest since stepping into the shoes of Helen Oldfield a month ago.**

His first error came when he was interviewed for his biog by the *Grauniad*'s PR people. Asked whether he thought he was rather young, at 26, to be assuming such a role, he pointed out that the legendary C.P. Scott had become editor of the entire paper at 26. The subtext was that current editor Peter Preston should move over and make way for "Miss" Targett before the stripling's 27th birthday and that other aspirants to the paper's top job, such as Targett's boss, features supremo Alan Rusbridger, won't even get a look-in.

After the *Eye* revealed how Targett doctored the copy of a contributor to pursue a personal vendetta, he was hauled into Rusbridger's glass cubicle and given a spectacular dressing-down. Targett has also offended some long-standing contributors to the arts pages. Because he is obsessed with having more surveys and fewer reviews (he wants to re-name the pages "Culture"), "Miss" Targett even spiked a lead theatre review by stalwart performer Michael Billington. Billington was furious, natch; and when he found Targett spiking some reviews without even reading them he complained to Rusbridger — by now growing a little tired of dealing with Targett's trail of human wreckage.

Next recipient of the Targett tact offensive was cultural critic Judith Williamson. She phoned Targett and suggested she should come into the office to input her copy as usual. Targett said this would be fine. When she had finished she invited him to look over it before she left. He said he didn't even know if he would be running her copy in future. Williamson lost her temper and Targett attempted to cool her down with the helpful observation that "you won't get very far with an attitude like that." Various worthies are now writing in to protest at the dumping of la Williamson.

Next Targett commissioned Catherine Bennett to write a critical profile of gay film director Derek Jarman. She interviewed Jarman once and when she returned for a second session, Jarman told her that he had heard the *Grauniad* arts desk was terrifically homophobic and that she had been asked to do a hatchet-job. The result was that editor Preston took it upon himself to sub Bennett's piece himself.

"Nigel's one of the top salesmen at the cigarette company"

WHAT HAPPENED to the *Sun*'s recent gripping series on Princess Di, based on the amazing revelations of Lady Colin Campbell?

Just when the paper was trailing an exciting TOMORROW: HOW THEY MADE PRINCESS DI A ROYAL, the series suddenly stopped. One reason of course may have been the news about the Fergie divorce. Another may have had something to do with the last few words of the *Evening Standard*'s rubbishing of Lady Colin Campbell.

Listing the "unfounded allegations" in the book, the *Standard* referred to the death of the princess's former security guard, Barry Mannakkee. "According to Campbell," the paragraph concluded, "his death was the work of MI5."

IT IS NOT only Merseysiders who loathe the *Sun*. So do the Serbs who live in Britain.

They are particularly miffed at a bloodthirsty news story the rag printed on 3 April, which was said to be an interview with a 17-year-old English mercenary who had just returned from fighting in Yugoslavia.

The youth, George Paterson, told the paper of his lust to kill Serbs: "An enemy truck parked well within my range and the driver sat in his cab... He was a sitting duck — the target I had been waiting for."

Paterson gave a gleeful account of what happened when he squeezed the trigger: "It seemed to lift him up in his seat like a doll and throw him to the floor. I was as sure as I could be that it killed him because I was using a particularly deadly sniper round. If one of these bullets hits a bone it tends to bounce around the body and rip the victim apart." He concluded: "I was glad I hit him — all Serbian soldiers deserve to die."

Most of the 40,000 Serbs in Britain come from the area where young Paterson was based, and it seems quite likely that some may even be related to the man whose body was ripped apart by the boy's shot. They were less than thrilled by the *Sun*'s blood-and-guts reporting of the killing, and they have now vowed to avenge themselves on the paper. One trusts that the security guards at Wapping are fully prepared.

JUST FANCY THAT

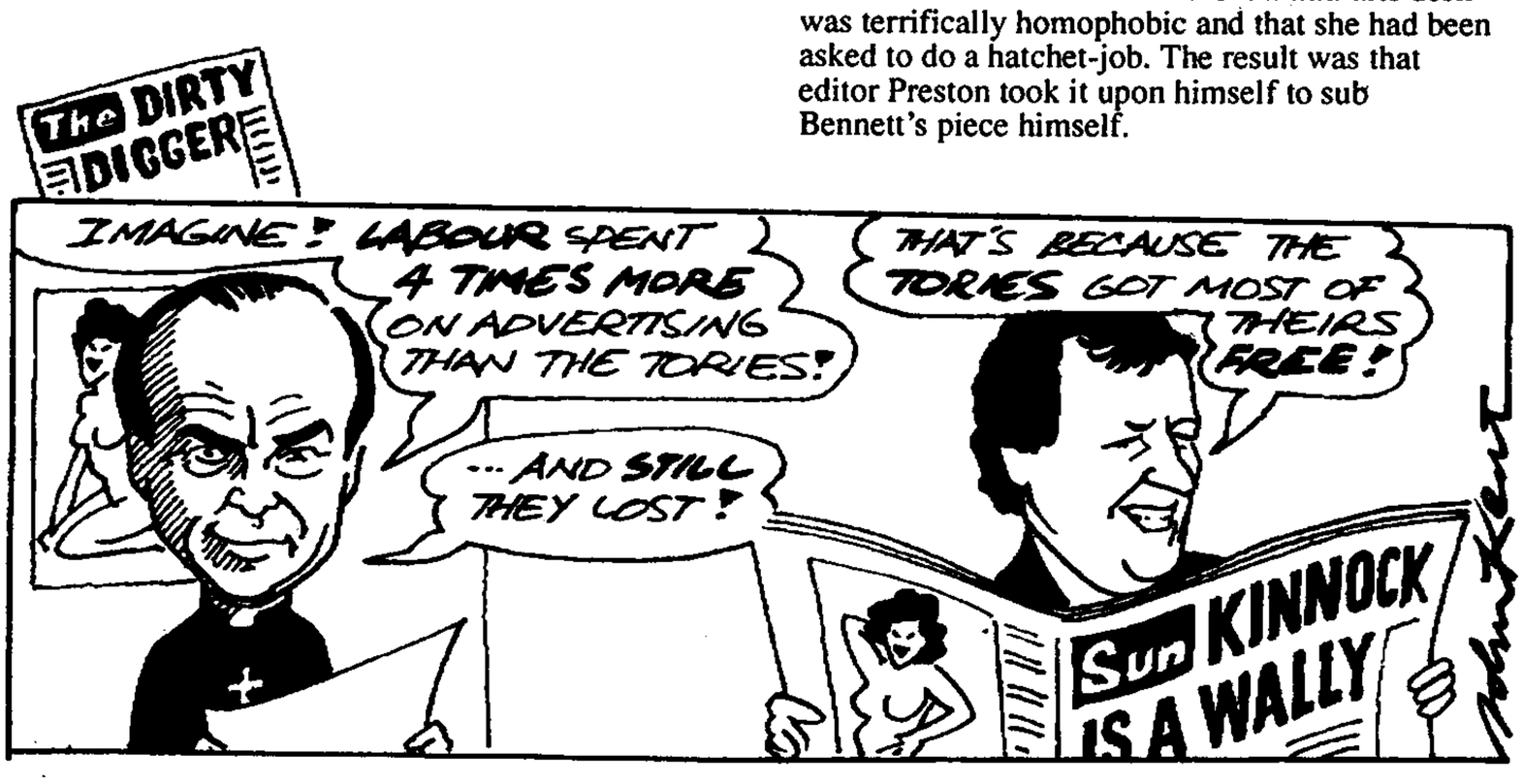
ON MONDAY the *Daily Mail* quoted some of the tributes that were paid following the death of Frankie Howerd.

"Benny Hill was also shocked by the death," it reported. "He said: 'We were great, great friends. A bit of laughter that was uniquely Frankie has gone with him.' "

On Tuesday, newspapers reported the discovery of the body of Benny Hill. By the time of Frankie Howerd's demise, it transpired, Hill was already dead. The quote attributed to him the previous day had in fact been manufactured by his manager, Dennis Kirkland.

● No one will have been more shocked by the death of Frankie Howerd than *Today*'s Tim Satchell, easily the world's worst diarist.

Writing under the heading FRANKIE HOWERD: FAST RECOVERY, Dim says in the latest issue of *Hello* magazine: "Entertainer Frankie Howerd, 70, has made a successful recovery following heart treatment." Oh dear. Another earth-shattering exclusive bites the dust.


The DIRTY DIGGER
IMAGINE! LABOUR SPENT 4 TIMES MORE ON ADVERTISING THAN THE TORIES!
... AND STILL THEY LOST!
THAT'S BECAUSE THE TORIES GOT MOST OF THEIRS FREE!
SUN KINNOCK IS A WALLY

ONE ASPECT of John Major's allegedly well-balanced cabinet not so far widely noticed is how much it will care about a future solution of the Irish question. Namely, not at all.

For years Sir Patrick Mayhew, the plodding lawyer who represents Tunbridge Wells for the Conservatives, put it around that he actually *wanted* the job of Northern Ireland secretary. This is an amazing request as the job is normally regarded as a poisoned chalice. But Sir Patrick comes from good Protestant stock in County Cork, where his mother's family still owns great tracts of land, and he longs to set matters right.

Sir Patrick has told the two prime ministers he has served how he would crack down on the IRA, but his extreme suggestions seemed unlikely to appeal to the Catholic minority in the north whose support is essential to any solution. Even Thatcher was cool at the prospect. She believed some show of opposition should be put up against the bigots of the Orange Order and stuck closely to the Anglo-Irish agreement. Major also was prepared to go ahead with the "talks" by Peter "My Darling Clementine" Brooke. But now Major has decided there is not the slightest prospect of anything happening in the north. The bumbling Brooke has to go — and Mayhew is just the man for the job of continuing the status quo.

Mayhew shot to fame in the Westland crisis when he earned a reputation for independence after his letter to the resigned defence secretary Michael Heseltine was leaked to the press on orders from Number Ten. Mayhew pretended to be very cross about the leak, and at one stage even threatened to send police to Downing Street.

However the real question, which in the furore after the leak no one bothered to answer, was: Why did Mayhew write to Heseltine in the first place? The letter raised an obscure and irrelevant point of law (and on which Mayhew was in any case wrong). Why a law officer should have concerned himself with such trivia at such a juncture is impossible to explain — unless Thatcher and the anti-Heseltine camp had suggested it.

Mayhew's relentless passion for the rule of law was in evidence after the Stalker affair when he was presented with clear evidence of conspiracy to murder by officers of the Royal Ulster Constabulary acting in concert with MI5. Without fear or favour, Mayhew decided not to prosecute on the grounds that the accused men were Protestants, er, sorry, members of the security services.

Mayhew was also involved in the backroom deal over Brian Nelson (see *Eyes passim*), the army intelligence agent who infiltrated Protestant paramilitaries and set about supplying assassins with the names of IRA suspects so they could be murdered. Mayhew approved the deal whereby Nelson pleaded guilty to a number of minor charges and was let off the murder charges — thus ensuring that not a word of what happened leaked out to the public.

In Northern Ireland Mayhew's right-hand man, in more ways than seventeen, will be Michael Mates. At least he will be more friendly with Heseltine, having run Hezza's campaign for the Tory leadership against Thatcher, and again against Major. Mates's ultra right-wing credentials on Ireland have been impeccable ever since he served as a rather inferior general staff officer in Lisburn in the early 1970s. His finest hour as chairman of the Commons select committee on defence was when he vetoed an inquiry into the wrongful dismissal from the army of former army information officer Colin Wallace, though he didn't declare until later that he and Wallace had been in the same barracks together.

WHY DID Keith Raffan, former Conservative MP for the Welsh seat of Delyn, retire before the general election?

The *Eye* can reveal that about 18 months ago Raffan had a meeting with government whips at which he inquired about his future prospects. What about the possibility of a job in the Welsh Office, especially since he had the support of Lord Edwards, the former secretary of state for Wales?

Raffan was disappointed to be told that he could expect nothing, because the whips knew all about his American boyfriend. In fact, Raffan did *not* have an American boyfriend.

He would have lost the seat anyway (it fell to Labour), but Raffan decided that fighting for it was not worth the hassle if his career within Parliament were to be permanently blocked as a result of anti-gay prejudice. He has now chosen to go and live in the United States.

ONE OF the unsung highlights of the election campaign was a leaflet sent to 40,000 homes on behalf of the sitting Tory member for Bury North, Alistair Burt.

The leaflet beat the drum about the Conservative commitment to education, promising "an increased emphasis on standards and quality", as one would expect from a former PPS to Kenneth Baker when the latter was secretary of state for education.

Sadly the leaflet contained several dire spelling and typographical mistakes: Wesminster; isssues; vice-chariman; interantional; suceessfully; and innumberable.

JUST HOW big a gong will go to Sir David Hannay, British ambassador to the United Nations?

Sir David, alleged to be the model for Sir Humphrey in *Yes, Prime Minister*, is now the subject of much betting as he can look forward to fulsome reward in the next honours' list for his sterling work in organising the non-summit in January and the sanctions against Colonel Gaddafi.

Both of course gave an electioneering John Major the chance to strut convincingly across the world stage.

NEWS has emerged of the desperate panic that gripped Labour's Walworth Road HQ when it suddenly occurred to the *apparatchiks* that tea-drinking Tony Benn might turn up at Labour's Sheffield rally and spoil the carefully stage managed display of moderation and red roses.

On the day of the rally Benn was telephoned by Larry Whitty, Labour's general secretary, who inquired nervously whether he would be coming.

"Why do you ask?" said Wedgie.

Whitty replied that space was very limited and, regrettably, there simply wouldn't be room for Benn to join his fellow-members of the national executive sitting on the platform — or, indeed, anywhere else where the cameras might spot him. However, a chair could probably be found near the back of the auditorium.

Benn then put Whitty out of his misery be revealing that he had never intended to go anyway.

AN UNPLEASANT story has been doing the rounds after the general election concerning the allocation of postal votes from expatriates overseas.

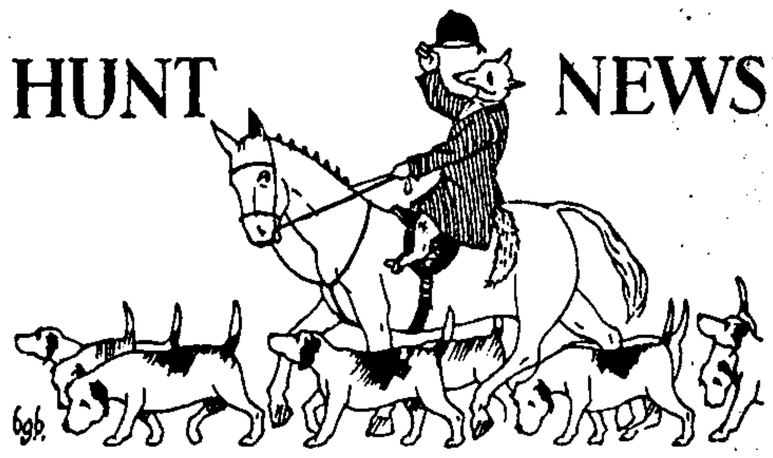
It is claimed in some quarters that the Tories, understandably worried about the closeness of the outcome, had made sure in the months preceding the election that those who registered for postal votes from abroad were nudged in the right direction — ie in the direction of marginal seats where they had never actually lived.

Naturally, Backbiter believes this suggestion to be quite preposterous and would be pleased to hear from any expatriate voter who can nail this lie once and for all.

'Backbiter'

● ***Our traditional post-election series, "The New Boys", will return in the next issue.***

HUNT NEWS



HUNT FOLLOWERS will be cock-a-hoop now that the Tory victory has put paid to the prospect of blood sports being banned. But it is less the hunters' sport than their displays of violence and flouting the law that continue to interest the *Eye*.

At a recent meet of the Bicester with Whaddon Chase foxhunt, Mr Bert Jones, a 64-year-old saboteur and United Reform Church minister, was enjoying a vigorous discussion with a hunt follower when the man climbed down from his horse and punched Jones in the face. He then proceeded to punch some female saboteurs. The police, who were present and witnessed these assaults, did nothing more than give the hunt follower a telling off.

At a meet of the Cottesmore Foxhunt on 26 March, meanwhile, there were far more appalling scenes. Martin Casbon, a 21-year-old saboteur from Peterborough, required hospital treatment for torn muscles after he had been first ridden down, then ridden over several times by the joint master and huntsman, Captain Brian Fanshawe.

Danny Attwood, another Peterborough saboteur, was climbing a stile when he was assaulted by a hunt supporter who beat him around the legs several times with an iron bar, causing him painful fractures. As is so often the case with certain hunts, the police failed to arrest any hunt followers, but instead arrested three saboteurs, charging them with violent disorder and assault causing actual bodily harm.

One of the saboteurs, Gareth Gee, was held by a police officer as a hunt follower attempted to wrest his camera from him. Later, Gee requested another police officer to go easy on one of his arms, which had been broken at Christmas and had only just come out of plaster. Rough handling resulted in a further break.

Meanwhile Susan Bailey, the 36-year-old wife of the joint huntmaster of the New Forest Foxhounds and herself a keen hunt follower, was recently given a three months' suspended jail sentence following an arrest for drinking and driving. Police spotted the Baileys' Range Rover veering dangerously across a road.

Susan Bailey was reportedly too drunk to breathe into a breathalyser and so a constable arrested her, at which point she started abusing him. As she was being bundled into the back of a police car, she reached out and scratched the driver's face, then sank her teeth into the arm of the other officer. After being convicted by a jury, the recorder fined Bailey £1,000 and ordered her to pay £250 compensation to the policemen. "If this offence had been committed by a young man in his twenties it would result in an immediate prison sentence."

'Reynard'

"I'm not voting for Smith – have you seen his tax plans?"

Grovel

● *TO WEMBLEY, where I have been invited to join a celebration of the life and work of St Freddie Mercury. Glancing at a television in the VIP room, I notice compere Tony Wilson getting rather indignant about the presence of "controversial" group Guns'n'Roses; he implies that they should be disqualified because their lead singer made anti-homosexual remarks five years ago.*

To hear Wilson and others talk, you would think that Queen themselves were always a byword for political correctness. Far from it: only a few years ago Freddie Mercury and his mates were denounced as "stooges of apartheid" for accepting a large sum of money to play at Sun City, a venue which is boycotted by right-on rock stars. This seems to have been quietly forgotten in the general beatification of Mr Mercury since his death.

I am amused, too, to see David Bowie falling to his knees and reciting the Lord's Prayer after giving us a solemn lecture about the need for safe sex. Can this be the same David Bowie who, only a few minutes earlier, was laddishly boasting of how promiscuous he and his fellow rock stars were in the 1970s?

I HEAR that Jason Donovan, the notorious heterosexual, agreed to reduce his demand for damages from the *Face* only on condition that the magazine must never disclose any of the documents it acquired while preparing its defence. Why, I wonder, should this be?

I am also told that he threatened to break off negotiations if the magazine stuck to its original plan of naming its cash appeal "the Lemon Tart Fund". His lawyers complained that the title was "offensive". This seems odd. It was Jason himself who boasted of using lemon juice to bleach his hair, and it was Jason who admitted during the trial that he had described himself as a "male tart". How can he possibly be offended by his own self-portrait?

Meanwhile, I am curious to know what Philip Schofield, the TV presenter who replaced Jason for a while in *Joseph and His Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*, makes of the recent libel case. So far he has remained notably silent.

TO GROSVENOR HOUSE for a fascinating luncheon in honour of Lord Solly Zuckerman, the worthy old chap who ran London Zoo in the days when it wasn't a crime to keep animals in cages, and who still has a tale or two to tell.

Hosted by Christina Foyle, radiant in Tory blue and looking more like Mrs Thatcher than ever, Lord Claret of Hillhead benevolently presides over the lunch which is attended by various lords, RAF bigwigs and geriatric scientists of huge distinction.

I spot the astronomer royal, who isn't even an astronomer, and Lord Dacre, as well as the Rt Rev Leonard Ashton, who says grace for Miss Foyle and was bishop of Hiroshima immediately after the war.

In an otherwise agreeable speech, Solly lets it slip that a fellow guest, Sir Rudolf Peieris, had once informed Prime Minister Clement Attlee in no uncertain terms what the effect of radiation would be after the atomic bomb in Japan. Naughty old Attlee always protested that no one had ever warned him.

● *A CRUEL joke is circulating in Washington. Who is the odd one out from Bill Clinton, Jane Fonda and Dan Quayle? The answer is "Hanoi" Jane — la Fonda is the only one who went to Vietnam!*

Pseuds Corner

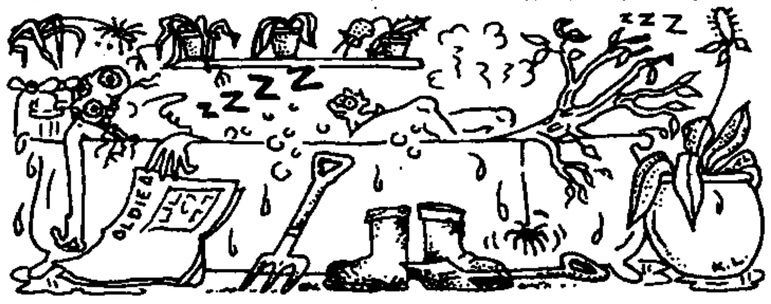
What is the lesson of that other, newly sprung tree (the cross) in whose bark Mark has carved his Gospel (for this is a book that bleeds)? Is it that Jesus' body, grafted onto the cross, become one with it, and thus become branch, tree, book, and leaf, inscribed with letters of blood, can now at last be read, no longer an indecipherable code but an open codex? And that in its (now) re(a)d(able) ink, lately invisible, the message that was scratched into the fig tree is transcribed: outside the gates, but only just, the summer Son is shining in full strength?

STEPHEN D. MOORE
Literary Criticism and the Gospels

Destroying Psychoanalysis: Pathfinding in our Depths
After years of immersion into anthropology, religion, mythology, dreams, poetry, classical analysis and the history of consciousness, the Moon came to Nor Hall in a dream and said "Rise up, blue princess, from your plastic, church-steeple bed and find a better place to lay your head. Instead of looking to the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost as guides, look to Gaia, Artemis and Aphrodite."

Course List, Rowe Conference Center, Mass.

Most people saw nothing special about that Wednesday. Most people at work in offices care little that a day is soft and windless. The weak spring sunshine can do little to penetrate the fumes and murk that swirl in congested city streets. On my low hill, where the wind blows nearly every day and mostly blows hard, a still spring day is a gazetted holiday when no one is allowed to work indoors. All that equinoctial day I planted trees, bare-armed. The sun was just strong enough to keep my kidneys warm as I stretched and bent and knelt and raked and



dug and staked. When 60 trees were in, the sun slid into an indigo blanket, the sky turned cold. I went indoors for my bath and fell asleep in it. A perfect, perfect day.

GERMAINE GREER
Independent Magazine

Samantha Norman: You had your penis pierced, as we saw earlier. Why did you have it done?

Skinner: ...I got a sense of *self* — it was almost an initiation. There's a sense of rediscovery and I reclaimed my own body. I got a lot of personal confidence that I never had before... We live in a society where people aren't comfortable with bodies — we are alienated from them. This is a way of reclaiming my body.

'Dial Midnight', LWT

He [Richard Oakham] explains: "I'd made the cheese snacks and we were all just standing around chatting when one of the guys cut his hand on the Sancerre bottle. It was a bad cut. If some woman had been there, she'd have rushed around, getting the Elastoplast and mopping the blood off the carpet. She'd have spoiled it. But we all just stood and looked at each other and we knew we were sharing the pain. It really meant something. I knew then I had to write about my experiences. I knew they were valid."

Guardian

CONTRIBUTORS: J. Carr, Brian Armstrong, Martin Holmes, John Lewis, Sally Weddell.

£10 paid for entries

TO LORD McAlpine's election night party in honour of Mrs Thatcher, who arrives straight from the airport with Denis, her voice hoarse from preaching her gospel to the Americans.

At one point I ask Denis to pass the bread. He obliges, saying that he too is "laying down some blotting paper". We watch the results with amusement. When Nuneaton falls to Labour, Denis exclaims: "Who wants bloody Nuneaton anyway?" — a sentiment with which I can only agree.

Among the guests is my old friend Simon Heffer, the carrot-haired deputy editor of *The Spectator* and keeper of the sacred flame of Thatcherism. The Conservative Party chairman Chris Patten — one of the cabinet ministers who told Mrs Thatcher she would have to resign, otherwise he would, after the first ballot in the Tory leadership contest — loses Bath to the Liberal Democrats and Heffer sets up a bellow of "Tory gain! Tory gain!". This is greeted with whoops and yells by the assembled followers of the faith.

Meanwhile the ex-leaderene latches on to the US ambassador, pointing out to him that the election campaign in the United States is much the same as it has been here. "No ideas..." she observes regretfully.

Later I bump into Mrs Thatcher again, this time at Conrad Black's Savoy party, where she repeats the same "no ideas" quip about the British and US elections to somebody else. And I thought the election here was supposed to be all about continuing the ideas of Thatcherism...

I CAN REVEAL the real reason Sir Jams Goldsmith asked Richard Branson to leave his Mexican "Xanadu" estate following a recent conference on ecological matters.

While it is true that Branson's children egged on by their father, had pushed both their host and his wife, Lady Annabel Goldsmith into the swimming pool, Sir Jams was less anxious about his sense of dignity than about the safety of the Bransons.

Another guest, a Frenchman, told Sir Jams that he was carrying a gun and that he would not hesitate to use it if Branson or members of his family were to subject him to such public humiliation.

● *SOURCES TELL me that my old sparring partner Jeffrey Archer is at long last poised to receive his working peerage.*

Archole is destined, I understand, for a junior position in the newly-created ministry of fun, since it covers his two areas of "expertise" — sport and the arts.

Pip Pip!

NOOKS and CORNERS

SO, Farewell Then the prospect of Mark Fisher MP being secretary of state for the environment. I have to say it is rather a relief not to have to endure Sir Richard Rogers posturing as Neil Kinnock's Albert Speer, and it is also a mercy that the Elgin Marbles will not be sacrificed as a vapid gesture by being sent away to the dimmest periphery of the European Community. On the other hand we have to put up with the Government that has kicked Londoners in the teeth by selling County Hall to the Japanese and is far too sympathetic to the artistic ambitions of My Lord Palumbo for comfort.

But perhaps everything will be different now. We have Michael Howard at environment and David Mellor is to be the first new "national heritage secretary" who will apparently take over listed buildings from the care of the DoE. What does this mean?

It may well be a boon if some of the cash from the proposed national lottery goes to historic buildings — though, knowing the odious treasury, an equivalent amount will probably be lopped off the grant aid dispensed by English Heritage. But the real test of a government's good intentions is how it treats that unfortunate quango, now under the chairmanship of the supreme Thatcherite, Jocelyn "Piranha Teeth" Stevens.

The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission, aka English Heritage, was established by Michael Heseltine under Mrs T's first administration to be a more independent body to look after historic buildings. Unfortunately, the latter years of Mrs. Thatcher's reign saw the organisation rendered increasingly impotent by bureaucratisation and, more seriously, ignored by the department of the environment when its advice was inconvenient.

English Heritage is the statutory body established to provide expert advice in the crucial matter of listing buildings — the central and essential weapon for protecting our heritage. As the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act defines: "... the secretary of state shall compile lists of such buildings, or approve, with or without modifications, such lists compiled by the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission of England..."

But the department of the environment feels increasingly able to make decisions without the expert advice of English Heritage. It "de-lists" buildings with alarming frequency and feels able to ignore English Heritage's recommendations for listing, despite the fact that neither ministers nor the civil servants in Marsham Street have any expertise in this area either in law or in fact.

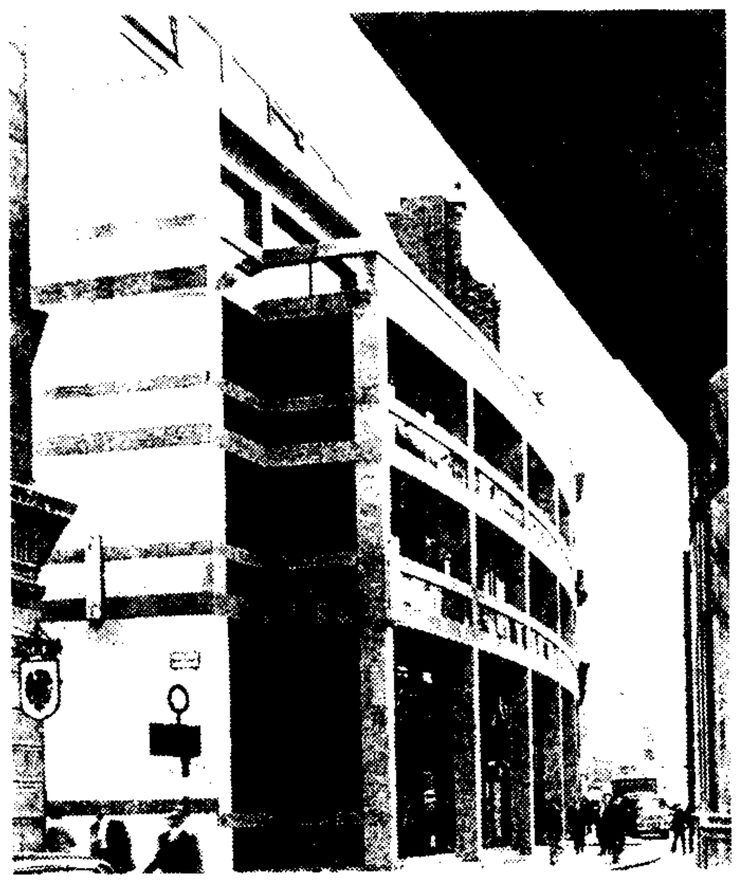
For instance, when Ilfracombe was resurveyed, the fieldworker proposed 161 buildings for inclusion on the statutory list with the full approval of English Heritage. The DoE initially whittled this down to 17. And when English Heritage proposed some 70 examples of post-war architecture for listing, that buffoon Lord Caithness reduced the number again to the magic figure of 17.

A good example of what has been going on is the case of the Clifton Spa Pump Rooms in Bristol. These were listed Grade II in October 1989. Three months later, after the owner (a developer with a scheme) had objected, the building was delisted against the repeated firm advice of English Heritage. The way in which this was done even provoked a complaint from the local MP, William Waldegrave, to the then minister of state for the environment, David Trippier (now unemployed).

Another minister, Baroness Blatch, subsequently responded to the Victorian Society's objections by claiming that "having considered all the evidence, ministers reached a different conclusion about the building's worth." How? Why? This can only be in respect of unofficial criteria not sanctioned in law.

Last year, in an attempt to open up a dialogue with the DoE, the Victorian Society prepared a detailed report on the listing of historic buildings in which all these anxieties and anomalies were outlined. Mr Heseltine declined to respond. Now, if things are to be more caring and cultured under Mr Major, Mr Mellor — our own Mr Heritage — might give some attention to this important matter.

'Piloti'



MY picture shows the poor Chamber of Shipping in St Mary Axe which, together with its florid neighbour, the Baltic Exchange, was badly damaged by the IRA bomb and may be demolished. This would be a shame. Although built in the 1960s, it was a handsome building which — unlike the Commercial Union tower and the egregious Lloyd's nearby — respected context and street lines while being a rational and well made design nicely ornamented with anchors and chains. Anyway, I liked it. Its fate is a salutary reminder that, even when English Heritage is allowed to do its job, no building, however beautiful or cherished, is ever safe. It is not only in Glasgow that old buildings miraculously "go on fire". Last month, a fine church by that good architect Ernest George — St Andrew's Streatham — was gutted in a merry blaze fuelled by gas cylinders stored in the basement. The building had been leased by the hopeless Church of England to The Holy Order of Cherubim & Seraphim & Church Movement Surulere (sic).

WHATEVER "new" Labour Party might emerge from the ashes of the general election, good old-fashioned fratricidal bloodletting will continue in Liverpool.

The day after the defeat "Kingmaker" John Edmonds, general- secretary of the GMB, declared that the trades unions would continue to support Labour because it defended the rights of the working man. He failed to mention the rights of the working woman, and no doubt wishes to draw a veil over the case of Frances Kidd, the Labour city councillor and G&M book-keeper who was sacked by the union for alleged "gross misconduct" last year.

Kidd got G&M members' backs up by voting on the council for measures that made their members redundant, and they also disputed her right to take time off from her work at the union for council duties such as these. Her sackable offence, however, was to provide Inspector Knacker with the name of a G&M member who allegedly assaulted lord mayor Trevor "Doggy Bag" Smith (*Eyes passim*) in the Rose and Crown. Legally, Kidd had no choice in the matter.

The resentment Kidd caused among her own union members may be understandable. When she saw a street cleaner leaning on a broom, for instance, she phoned the director of cleansing to complain. The fact that she had sick notes for her union employer, but wasn't so ill that she couldn't perform council duties was another own goal.

Edmonds would have sided with Kidd were it not for the fact that his own union was involved — even though the locals are led by raving Spartist Ian "Gnasher" Lowes, head of notorious GMB branch 5.

The GMB in Liverpool made sure union election funds did not go to Peter Kilfoyle, who supported Frances Kidd's unfair dismissal case. Edmonds must regard Lowes & Co as an inoperable cancer. Successful surgery would mean the death of the patient, but then the same *could* be said for the unions with the Labour Party nationally.

ONE trade union doing its utmost to vindicate 13 years of Tory anti-union law is the National Union of Journalists, busily consigning itself to the dustbin of history following the sacking of its general secretary Steve Turner.

Turner was elected fairly by the union's dwindling membership on a platform of anodyne policies, including opposition to a merger with the fallen print union giants. However, the crazed zealots who control the union's Popcorn House HQ managed to stymie Turner's accession with a series of bewildering and Kafkaesque manoeuvres.

First they awarded the ruling regime ousted by Turner a £200,000 golden handshake, despite the NUJ's ever-growing six-figure debt — £1 million and rising — *and* they handed over the office Robin Reliant. Then they forced him to sign a humiliating contract which included the threat of instant dismissal should he ever be committed to a mental hospital "under the 1959 Mental Health Act".

When Turner belatedly took office, the union old guards managed to force through a censure against him. At his first meeting in charge they objected to his rejection of a merger with the Irish print union prior to a ballot being held, despite the fact that he had stood on such policies in his manifesto.

They couldn't stomach Turner's support for British troops in the Gulf, which was contrary to years of right-on union support for dodgy Middle Eastern regimes. And last summer, to no one's surprise, Turner was sacked on trumped-up charges of flouting union policy.

The Popcorn House mafia is now so consumed by guilt, however, that it agreed to make a £100,000 pay-off to the hapless Turner at a meeting from which NUJ full-time officials were barred lest they give impartial evidence.

Turner's case for reinstatement will be put by the *Daily Mirror*'s Spartan Trotskyite investigator Paul Foot at this year's union conference. The print unions, meanwhile, wait open mouthed until they can gobble up whatever is left of the NUJ when it eventually expires.

'Blackleg'

Deaths

Veterinary Record

Dr P. J. Posthumus

R. G. M. writes — Dr Peter Jacobus Posthumus, who died in August 1991,

EYE TV

Sky News

(BSkyB)

A FOURTH Conservative victory will, if it achieves nothing else, at least ensure the future of satellite television.

Even within Conservative Central Office, there are those who gratefully credit the brutish tabloids with compensating for the failures of the official Tory campaign. Now Rupert Murdoch and Lord Rothermere — the newspaper rivals who share an interest in Tory success and in British Sky Broadcasting — can expect part of their reward in the form of further governmental cossetting of extra-terrestrial television, coupled with the continued mugging of the BBC.

It was noticeable, however, that even the cross-interested newspapers did not attempt to claim that Sky News, the 24-hour current affairs service, had trounced the traditional stations with its election coverage. This was a rare concession to reality. For, as those tuning in recently will have discovered, Sky News continues to be a kind of CNN for amoeba.

The best comedy is provided by the presenters, boy-girl double-acts who sit uncomfortably close together like an engagement snap arranged by an old-fashioned photographer. For obscure reasons (cheap immigrant labour, perhaps?), the males are mainly thickset Australians while, for considerably less obscure reasons, the females are sullen just-out-of-bed pouters. Crucial to the selection of both halves of these Bruce-and-Bobbi duets seems to have been the possession of no more than a pub-understanding of Current Affairs.

One of the regular pleasures of the service is the sight or sound of one of the Sky foreign correspondents — crouching with their satellite telephone under gunfire — attempting to politely field an all-purpose generalisation from the London frontpersons along the lines of "What does this mean for the Nagorno Karabakian/Muscovite/Bosnia-Herzogovian in the street?" or — even more hedging-the-bets — "What is it they want?", in which "they" cunningly covers the government, the people or the insurrectionist forces.

Even those covering events happening closer to home are not immune from the broad-brush understanding of the presenters. Another frequent joy for viewers is the fleeting flash of disbelief or irritation across the features of the Sky political editor, the excellent and intelligent Adam Boulton, as he is forced to begin another reply to the studio with a defuser like "Well, Bruce, that may be a *little* unfair to Mr Kinnock" or "Well, Bobbi, that's certainly one view, but a more common belief at Westminster is that..."

For example, having just lost an election he was expected to win and accepted a defeat which signalled the end of his political career, Neil Kinnock politely announced on the Friday that he would be making a statement on the following Monday. It was privately made clear this would almost certainly be his resignation. Might he not be allowed 48 hours of sleep and grief alone? Not by Sky News, which parked a reporter and camera crew outside his house for the whole weekend, moaning about the Labour leader's reluctance to talk to the press. "He was happy enough to talk to the press last week," growled the reporter. "Perhaps now we're seeing another face of Neil Kinnock!"

Offering 24-hour room service on television, it seems, you simply can't get the staff. Nor, it is increasingly clear, can you easily avoid a menu in which the standard offerings are stale (news packages repeated every hour or half-hour) and the dishes of the day half-baked (events shouted out as first news emerges). For an illustration of the danger of serving news-food not cooked through, take the Sky News coverage of the post-election bombing campaign.

A Bruce and a Bobbi announced that reports were coming in of explosions in the City. Then a Bobbi with a day-off — resting after the election campaign, she explained — telephoned from her Islington kitchen to say that she had heard a loud bang while standing at her sink. The Bruce and the on-Bobbi thought this might mean another bomb in north London. Then a viewer phoned in from Bexhill to say he too had heard a substantial thump outdoors. On-Bobbi and Bruce thought this might mean as many as four or five IRA bombs.

As we soon discovered, there were two. Off-Bobbi and Bexhill Man had heard either long-distance echoes or cars back-firing. Is this really acceptable as a way of covering big and disturbing news stories as they break?

'Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

HOT ON the heels of Conrad Black and Barbara Amiel, another gruesome Canadian is preparing to invade the British media.

He is Moses Znaimer, a Toronto mogul who is one of the favourites to win the licence for Britain's Channel 5, the mysterious new TV station for which the Independent Television Commission invited bids last week.

Anyone wondering what Znaimer will bring to British screens should study the output of his station in Toronto, City-TV, which is famed for crass vulgarity and Maxwellian self-promotion: he featured his parents' wedding anniversary in the channel's main news bulletin, and when City-TV ran a series of interviews called *The Originals* he decided that the opening programme should be a grovelling profile of himself. Recently he surprised his critics by running a moralistic debate on gun control — only to follow it with the gratuitously violent Chuck Norris film *Delta Force*.

Moses Znaimer himself once appeared in a movie, playing a drug dealer in *Atlantic City*. When the Znaimer character came to a sticky end, cinema audiences in Canada cheered loudly.

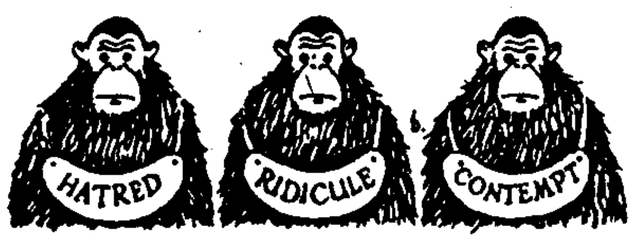
"I'd love to stay and listen to this fascinating conversation all night, gentlemen, but unfortunately I have to wind it up now and go to bed"

ART NEWS

HOW the vultures gather! Hot news from Sotheby's is its offer to impecunious Lloyd's "names" who may be faced with a cash call due to mounting losses and massive fraud.

In an undated letter to the names, a Mr David Moore-Gwyn of Sotheby's paintings and drawings department generously offers to value works of art for possible sale.

"If members [of Lloyd's] choose to sell works of art to meet a cash call, we are able to advance up to 35 percent of the estimated proceeds of sale when the items have been delivered to us and entered for sale," he cheerfully advises.



LIBEL NEWS

THE behaviour of Alastair "Blubber" Brett, the *Sunset Times*'s lachrymose lawyer, grows ever more bizarre. He has now issued a writ against the *Observer* for its claim that he paid money to a criminal for evidence in the libel suit brought against the *Sunday Times* by Carmen Proetta.

This comes in spite of the report in the last *Eye* that Brett did indeed pay money to the family of a convicted drug-smuggler, Joseph Wilkins, in return for an affidavit against Proetta. It is also in spite of the *Observer*'s apology to Brett, published last month.

Brett says the apology was "not worth anything": he wants "proper compensation" — ie a big cheque — and is even demanding aggravated damages on the ground that the *Observer* published its story out of malice. It was, he says, "the only national newspaper to publish claims against him". As Brett ought to know, this is untrue. His largesse to the crooked Wilkins was first disclosed in the *Independent on Sunday*.

In his capacity as in-house lawyer to the crusading *Sunset Times*, Brett has often criticised the iniquity of the British libel laws. Yet he seems remarkably eager to use these same unfair laws himself. It is only a few years ago since he extracted £6,000 in a libel settlement from two hacks on his own paper, Peter Hounam and Andrew Hogg, who had written a book which incurred his displeasure. One trusts the *Observer* will defend itself more robustly.

INVESTIGATIVE hack Duncan "Dunky" Campbell, who prides himself on his knowledge of the telephone system, is apparently unaware that faxes can go to the wrong number.

Thanks to some such technical mishap, Lord Gnome last week acquired a letter that Dunky had intended to fax to a solicitor acting for *The Pink Paper*, the gay newspaper he is suing for libel.

The letter reveals that Campbell is "concerned about" recent coverage of the case in *Private Eye*. "The conduct of the defendants, yourself and *The Pink Paper* during the next few weeks will be particularly closely examined," he warns, adding that he will be very cross if any more revelations about the case appear in the *Eye*.

Meanwhile, the ever-litigious hack has commenced yet another lawsuit — this time against no less an institution than Hill Samuel Bank Ltd. He claims that the bank's St James's Square branch in London paid several hundred pounds, without his approval, out of a bank account of which he was supposed to be a co-signatory. Dunky had opened the joint account with a television production company which was working with him on a documentary. All cheques were supposed to be signed by both Duncan Campbell and a director of the TV company.

Alas for Dunky, he neglected to provide the sample signature that was required — and his "mandate" as co-signatory was thus invalid. Undeterred by this rather glaring weakness in his case, the *New Statesman*'s very own Perry Mason seems determined to press on. It is beginning to look as if the entire autumn term in the high court will be given over to his many lawsuits.

BRITISH libel judgments and awards suppress free speech and are unenforceable in the United States under the first amendment, according to a perspicacious ruling in New York recently.

The case involved Indian businessmen Ajitabh Bachran, who had won a British court judgement of $70,000 against a Manhattan-based organisation, India Abroad Publications Inc. It is the first time that a New York court has refused to apply a foreign libel judgement, and Justice Shirley Fingerhood (who enjoys the blessing of Lord Gnome) wrote that while Britain shares many legal principles, it lacks a first amendment.

Such principles of freedom of speech would be "seriously jeopardised by the entry of foreign libel judgements granted pursuant to standards deemed appropriate in England but considered antithetical to the protections afforded the press by the US Constitution". Quite!

HACKWATCH No 20: Barbara Amiel

REACTIONARY Canadian glamourpuss Barbara Amiel arrived in London in the mid-1980s. In her 30-odd years in Toronto she had risen from a lowly job in the typing pool at the Canadian Broadcasting Commission to the editorship of the *Toronto Sun*.

Her ascent in the British media was even more spectacular. Within months of her arrival she was writing for *The Times* and appearing on *Question Time*; before long she had a weekly column in the *Sunset Times*. Her short skirts and high heels became a familiar sight in Conservative salons: Paul Johnson, Sir Peregrine Worsthorne, Lord Wyatt and even Margaret Thatcher were all spellbound by her fragrance and raunchily right-wing views. The thrice-wed Amiel was said to be on the verge of marrying Lord Weidenfeld, but then she jumped into bed with her current paramour, *Telegraph* owner Conrad Black.

During the election Amiel was assigned by the *Sunset Times* to write long profiles of the three party leaders. She later complained that she spent so much time sitting at her desk composing these articles that her weight had gone to her hips; preparing to go to lunch with Douglas Hurd the other day, she found that none of her skirts fitted her any more. Such are the hazards of seeking after truth.

Still, she should shed the pounds quickly enough. Her *Sunday Times* column, for which she is paid £1,000 apiece, usually reads as if she has dashed it off in quarter of an hour. Here are recent highlights:

6 October: Sir Allan Green is caught kerb-crawling, and Barbara ruminates on sexual desire. "How can one possibly understand human beings?" she concludes. "What a mystery it all is."

13 October: The case of Judge Clarence Thomas confirms Amiel's view that "extreme feminism is now a state religion in America". Even if he did pester Anita Hill sexually, so what? To ban sexual harassment "goes fundamentally against a free society".

27 October: The Law Lords have ruled that husbands who rape their wives can be prosecuted. Amiel is outraged by this victory for "the forces of extreme feminism and statism".

3 November: Ted Kennedy, who has shamefacedly confessed to "faults" in his private life, is a victim of "the neo-Victorianism of today's feminists and their supporters".

10 November: Amiel comes over rather neo-Victorian herself, attacking people who "encourage the notion that promiscuity is OK". Oddly, this hymn of praise to monogamy neglects to mention her own highly polygamous record.

24 November: Britain should get tough with immigrants. "We [*sic*] must make it clear that while we undertake to give tolerance to newcomers, we expect equal tolerance in return. We extend the protection of our principles to everyone regardless of race or religion who is in this country, but we will not alter those principles to resemble the habits, principles and cultures of the region from which they come."

15 December: Amiel pours scorn on the scare about "date rape". True, women are sometimes "overpowered and forced to have sex" with male acquaintances, but "this lacks the awful terror of rape as we have known it in the past: for a sexually mature woman, the act of unwanted sex with a known man is not in itself traumatic". Indeed, such an assault is merely part of "normal courtship patterns between men and women".

19 January: This week's column is supposed to be about cigarette advertising (in favour, natch), but we soon return to her favourite subject. "Do you remember that scene in the film *Two Women*? Sophia Loren plays the mother who is forced to watch her young daughter being raped... Those of us who remember something of the second world war, in which *Two Women* is set, can recall the fear women had as the Soviet Red Army raped its way across Europe..."

2 February: Condemns the "neo-Victorian" press for harping on about Bill Clinton's affair with Gennifer Flowers. Businessmen and politicians may sometimes "choose a brassy-looking strumpet for a fling", but it doesn't affect their performance at work. "One might even accept the notion that people in highly tense jobs may often have a more highly strung sexuality than others. Who knows? It's all a mystery."

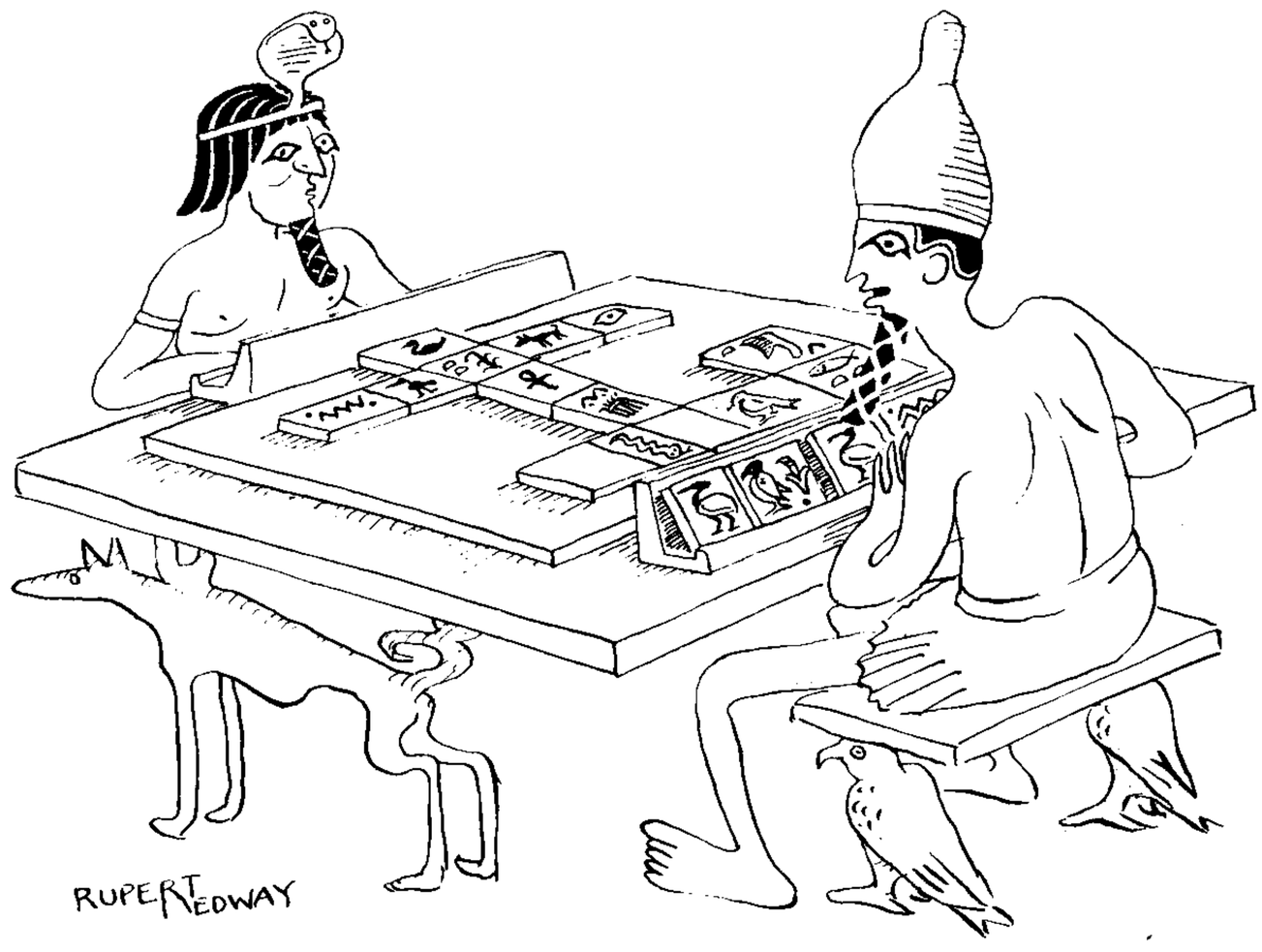
16 February: The "bedside hand-holding and kissing of Aids patients" by the Princess of Wales is "horrifying", Amiel believes. "This great public display of 'compassion' is making the disease 'acceptable'."

15 March: Barbara's series of "in-depth profiles" of British party leaders begins with Paddy Ashdown. Her conclusions: Paddy is a "rather ordinary" and ill-educated man who buys his suits at Marks and Spencer; his "plumpish" wife wears a "synthetic" skirt that is "just a touch asymmetrical"; his supporters are "aesthetically unappealing human beings".

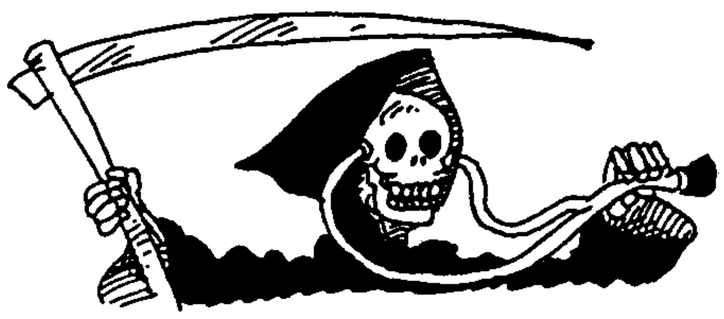
22 March: Neil Kinnock's turn to get the "in-depth" treatment. He has been "consistently wrong" about everything, and his wife's opinions "lacked real knowledge or logic".

29 March: Finally, our impartial hackette turns her gaze to John Major. He is, she reports, "one of the nicest and one of the toughest politicians around", while his wife is "an enchanting woman with a great deal of insight".

12 April: "Being British, we are supposed to play the game rather than enjoy the win," Amiel writes after the Tories' victory. Her inclination, however, is to "just hang out and gloat." Perhaps this is because, as she seems to have forgotten, she is not actually British at all.



"How many ibises are there in 'sphinx'?"



DOING THE ROUNDS

HOSPITAL portering was never the most lucrative pastime — at least not until the Government's waiting list initiatives.

On 28-29 March, porters in **Hull** raked in £250 for a four-hour weekend stint to rush through a few lingering toenails. This compares favourably with the bashful £2.96 an hour the surgical houseman earned for the same shift.

As Mrs Bottomley struggles to renounce Labour's claims that the NHS is being privatised, she may wish to reflect on why the health department is classifying extra NHS work by consultants as private. This includes weekend work to cut waiting lists, operating on NHS patients in private hospitals and seeing patients in fundholders' surgeries. Consultants are also finding that their NHS insurance does not cover them for working outside their NHS hospitals.

Mrs Bottomley was also responsible for the 1990 deal to reduce junior doctors' hours to 83 per week "as soon as practicable". Practicable has a broad interpretation: 16 months later, all 22 pre-registration house-officers at **Westminster** hospital are working more than 83 hours per week.

● **BRISTOL'S Southmead Hospital** adopted trust status on 1 April by changing its name to **Southmead Hospital Independent Trust (SHIT).** This unfortunate acronym is a fair description of what junior doctors think of Dr Peter Harrison, clinical director of medicine. Prior to commencing their jobs, medical house-officers had their overtime pay unilaterally slashed from 11 to seven UMTs (units of medical time) without cutting hours. After several acrimonious meetings with SHIT, Harrison finally deigned to pay the doctors 10 UMTs, still saving money and giving the illusion of hours' reductions. Now the tight-fisted physician is refusing to provide locum cover for absent doctors, even though their contracts clearly state that he should. Morale is so low that many final-year Bristol students are considering boycotting Southmead.

Meanwhile Southmead has refused to allow two Bristol women to have their babies at the hospital, even though they have given birth there before and their medical notes are kept there.

According to Mr Phillip A. Smith, consultant obstetrician, this is because of "a decision by the purchasing authority to limit the number of deliveries at Southmead to 5,700 a year. We would be quite happy to deliver more, as we have done in the past, but in 'the new world' it is not possible without the necessary funding to adequately staff and supply the delivery suite. It is not really a case of refusing patients, but we have been instructed to keep within our contract from now on."

Southmead has also devised a cunning ploy to avoid clogging up the hospital with sick medical patients and to free beds for more lucrative surgical patients. A 12 March memo states: "With immediate effect, emergency medical and elderly patients residing in Frenchay and UBHT catchment areas will not be admitted to Southmead". As for those within Southmead's area, the memo states that "when there are ten or less *[shurely 'fewer'? Ed]* medical beds at the beginning of take, Bed Bureau will be informed that the hospital is closed to GP admissions".

Loosely translated, GPs won't be able to get sick medical patients into hospital even if there are free beds.

A few days after **Bristol Children's Hospital** fended off allegations that they had demanded a cash pledge before accepting a critically injured child, a pre-election £50 bouquet mysteriously arrived at the intensive care unit... with best wishes from the Bristol Conservative Association. Sadly, flowers are banned on ICU to maintain air purity, and the bouquet has since been reassembled as a wreath... for William Waldegrave.

● **WHITTINGTON Hospital in north London** has come up with some astonishing ways to clear its £3.3 million debt. Managers propose to abolish the evening meal — and replace it with soup and a roll. "It's healthier not to eat a heavy meal at night," says hospital spokesman Richard Anderson. "Patients only need one meal a day." The hospital also proposes the usual "end-of-season" axing of jobs, beds and operating theatres to get back into the black.

● **KETTERING Health Authority** has allocated half the surface area of its outpatient appointment cards to sales pitches by local businesses. The brain behind this novel money-spinner has, however, ensured that space is given only to health-related ventures: there are ads for a toning centre, a babyware shop ("multiple births a speciality") and a Chinese restaurant.

● LAST October, Gordon "Chunky" Mitchell, chief executive of **Yeovil and East Somerset NHS Trust,** disciplined a junior doctor for writing a lighthearted complaint about the disgusting state of the mess in the medical press. Now Mr Mitchell has upset casualty officers by paying them only half what they are owed for overtime...

M.D.

TALES OF CARTER-FUCK (No. 94)

MARTI CAINE, the entertainer, was so angry when the *Daily Mirror* printed a sequel to an article about her fight against cancer without paying her any more money that she consulted the distinguished and avaricious libel lawyer, Peter Carter-Fuck.

He advised her that she had no case in libel — the article was extremely flattering — but she could sue for breach of contract and "passing off", which she did.

As the case wore on, things didn't look too good for Marti. She'd been paid handsomely for the original *Mirror* article and had been offered £25,000 for a follow-up, which she rejected. It wasn't clear which contract had been breached or what had been passed off — the follow-up article was standard drivel, most of it dredged up from the original.

Carter-Fuck got worried. He offered to drop the case for £25,000. The *Mirror* refused. Finally, in election week, the case was settled out of court. Not a penny was paid in damages. But £21,000 was paid — as a contribution to Carter-Fuck's costs — another example of how the grand old man of British libel rarely emerges from a case without some compensation for his hard work and sagacious advice, even if his client ends up with nowt.

O.B.N.

Walking into Whitehall, one realised yet again that what you see is what you get — a man with extraordinary powers of concentration, possessed of old-fashioned courtesy, awesome powers of self-discipline and an intelligence that burns constantly, regardless of pressure.

MICHAEL JONES
(on John Major)
Sunday Times

Submitted by A.G. Davies.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

LEGAL NEWS

CAN A JUDGE perjure himself in his own court? The question was raised during an incident at a recent "poll tax riot" trial in Colchester.

Following the conviction of Terry Frost — one of the so-called Colchester 16 — the court was adjourned and the judge, Mr Justice Binns, left the courtroom. Shortly afterwards, Mr Frost, who suffers from a personality disorder, let rip with a loud — if wordless — protest.

Summoned by his clerk, Judge Binns — notorious as the man who sentenced black journalist Brian Moore to two and a half years for defending himself against a racist mob — hurried back from his chambers. Binns proceeded to gobsmack observers by telling the court that, as Mr Frost had shouted "yip, yip, yipee!" while the judge was still present, the yell was contempt of court.

Despite repeated efforts by Mr Frost's counsel to apologise, Binns was adamant there would be a contempt of court hearing and that the matter would be dealt with most severely.

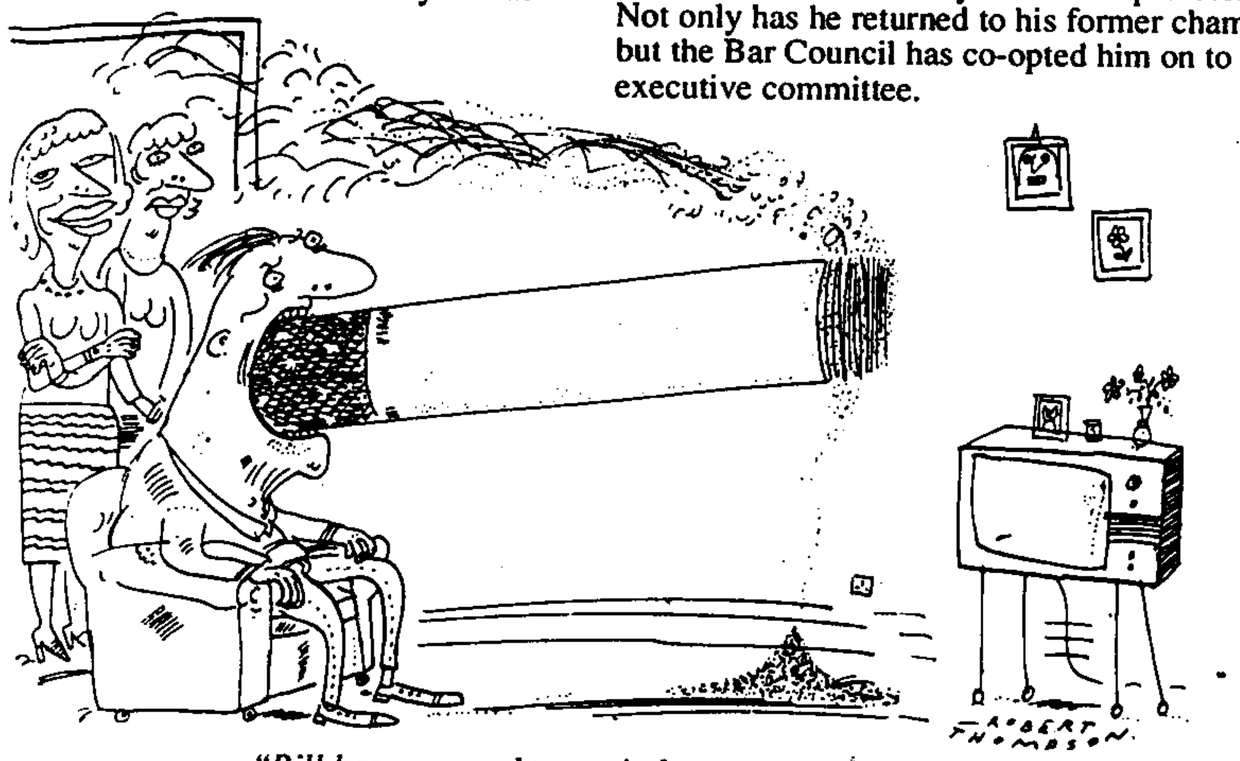
It soon became clear that many of those present — including lawyers and at least one police officer — would be prepared to testify that Judge Binns had left the room before the yell was heard. Prosecuting counsel scurried to the judge's chambers, and within minutes, Mr Justice Binns was back in court and, surprisingly enough, accepting Mr Frost's apology.

A PROFILE of Gareth Williams QC, vice-chairman of the Bar Council, in a recent edition of *Counsel*, the barristers' trade mag, contained an intriguing omission.

Apart from revealing that Williams is an expert on the proper terms of address for members of the aristocracy, as well as on very expensive wines, the profile quoted his partner of several years, Veena Russell. According to *Who's Who*, however, Williams has never been divorced from his wife Pauline; while according to the 1979 law list, a Miss V. Russell was down as belonging to the same set of chambers as Williams. Upon inquiring further I discover that Williams has a child by Miss Russell.

No doubt in these modern times such arrangements seem less than extraordinary, but surely the magazine of the Bar could be a little more straightforward in explaining his domestic set-up?

The Bar Council, for example, has a thoroughly modern attitude on some matters, for I hear that one-time kerb-crawler and former director of public prosecutions, Sir Allan Green, has been rehabilitated by his fellow professionals. Not only has he returned to his former chambers, but the Bar Council has co-opted him on to its executive committee.



"Bill has managed to get it down to one a day"

Sally Deedes

WHEN British Telecom changed London's telephone numbers last year it claimed that the new codes 071- and 081- would serve London well into the next century.

As disclosed in *Eye* 789, BT already knew that the codes would have to be changed again around the end of this decade when London once more runs out of numbers. If beleaguered phone users had known this, it is unlikely they would have cooperated quite with BT so uncomplainingly.

BT has bungled the numbering system and created an unholy shambles. Instead of carefully assigning codes to cater for likely demand, it has squandered codes on areas which didn't need them: for example, a small Scottish island has *one million* potential lines for 35 subscribers, while towns such as Leeds and Sheffield are running out of numbers.

Dissent to the proposed changes is now beginning to be heard: the Telecom Managers Association (TMA) has come out against the plans and the Telecom Numbering and Addressing Board (TNAB) is backtracking on its original endorsement of the scheme. Yet Oftel, the government watchdog, insists the plans must now go ahead because no objections were raised during the two-year "consultation" period.

The consultation exercise was itself something of a fiasco. Costing tens of thousands of pounds, it generated virtually no information about the technical problems and enormous cost of the proposals, and so generated little discussion. The final report was priced at an astonishing £435 which ensured that very few people read about the drawbacks and costs; and a sanitised version, selling for a more modest £35, reached a wider audience but omitted the embarrassing details.

Outside experts maintain that the plan to add extra digits to the beginning of every dialling code would be hugely expensive because the network only examines the first four digits of any number and this would demand a huge reprogramming of equipment costing millions and would make much telephone hardware now in use — switchboards, etc — redundant.

It would, some experts argue, make much more sense to add a digit to everybody's *local* code *after* the first four numbers. This would give every code ten times as many numbers and so permit several exchanges to share one code. The liberated codes could then be used for new services causing less disruption and presenting a very much cheaper operation.

The "add a digit to the beginning" scheme was devised several years ago by Arthur Orbell when he was BT's head of network strategy. The problem now rests with Oftel, which must sort out the mess as quickly as possible to make room for the mushrooming of new services. The man responsible for finding a solution is Oftel's technical director — one Arthur Orbell. Could the two possibly be related? And does BT still call the shots at Oftel? Of course not.

US ELECTION LATEST

BILL CLINTON'S "promise everything to everyone" campaign to be the next Democratic president of the United States hit new depths in New York.

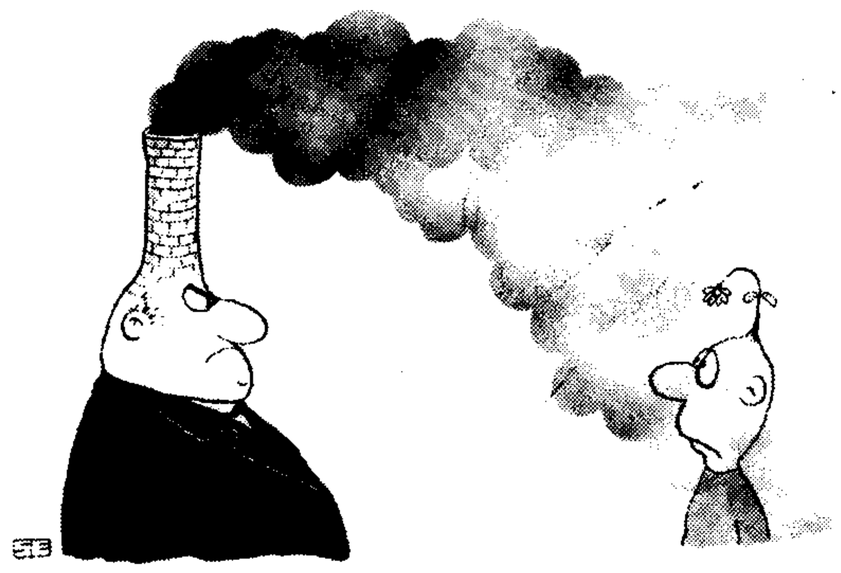
He promised a group of Orthodox Jews that he would keep a kosher kitchen in the White House. Later, his spin doctors assiduously told unconvinced hacks that it was a joke.

Less funny was the Arkansas governor's U-turn on Israel, since explained by the fact that the general counsel on his campaign, David Ifshin, happens to double up as the general counsel for AIPAC, the notorious Israel lobby that until recently did such a good job of keeping Yitzhak Shamir's wallet stuffed with dollars.

AIPAC is renowned for its ability to raise money for pro-Israeli candidates, which is why Clinton is in the race and other Democrats like Tsongas have had to drop out. But either AIPAC is losing its touch or American Jews are getting wise both to it and Clinton. It seems there is a lot more money going to George Bush from the Jewish community than to Clinton.

DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'Old Muckspreader'



DAVID NAISH, amiable spin doctor of the nation's farmers, worries that his members will be blamed for the failure of the current round of world trade talks, GATT.

Collapse looks inevitable as the European Community's farmers threaten to take to the streets in their muck spreaders should any of their fat subsidies be cut.

The result of this blackmail is almost certain to cripple world trade and lead to the loss of tens of thousands of jobs in industry — hence much squirming from the subsidy lobby at Agriculture House in Knightsbridge.

Naish protests that farming is not the villain: issues other than farm subsidies have led to breakdown of the talks, he claims. His arguments might have more conviction if the NFU's own chief economist, Sean Rickard, hadn't let the cat out of the bag on the BBC's *Farming Today* radio programme.

Failure to agree the GATT round might be no bad thing for farmers, he candidly admitted. No wonder the NFU's PR department is having to burn the midnight oil...

SPRING is in the air as cornfields echo to the sound of chemical sprayers operated by chaps in NASA space suits and the farming mags are chock full of glossy ads for new pesticides.

While farmers may complain that their incomes are in free fall, the multinational chemical companies who control them report record sales and rising profits.

Ciba-Geigy, the world's biggest pesticide manufacturer, reports £1.65 billion in sales last year, with profits up 24 per cent to £500 million. Bayer, the number three, reports agrochemical sales up 2.4 per cent to £1.9 billion, while chemical giant BASF chuckles all the way to the bank with sales up 3 per cent to £1.65 billion.

All very encouraging for subsidy minister John Gummer as he returns to his old desk in Whitehall Place. Clear signs that the taxpayers' billions spent on farm support have led to a thriving industry.

REASSURING words from MAFF food safety experts, the people who brought us peace-of-mind over salmonella in eggs and mad cow disease in mad cows.

Dioxins — among the most toxic contaminants known to man — present no health threat to consumers of the average British diet, it seems.

The Whitehall food sleuths have been looking at dioxin levels in such staples as milk, meat and vegetables. They estimate that the average Brit consumes less than a quarter of the supposed "tolerable daily intake" of the stuff. Quite what "tolerable" means isn't clear since many medical experts claim there's no safe level of dioxin consumption.

Convinced carnivores might not feel too happy either. Even the professional complacency mongers admit that dioxin levels in meat and fish are higher than in other foods.

Meanwhile the ministry's farm advisory service, ADAS, pushes new methods that can only increase dioxin contamination. One of the fastest-growing new wheezes is the heavily-pushed idea of making silage inside plastic bags. After use farmers simply put a match to them and the result is another dollop of dioxin on the grazing meadow.

WATER NEWS

PRIVATE water companies and their friends in the environment department have been shocked by new European Commission regulations banning sewage in the sea off bathing beaches.

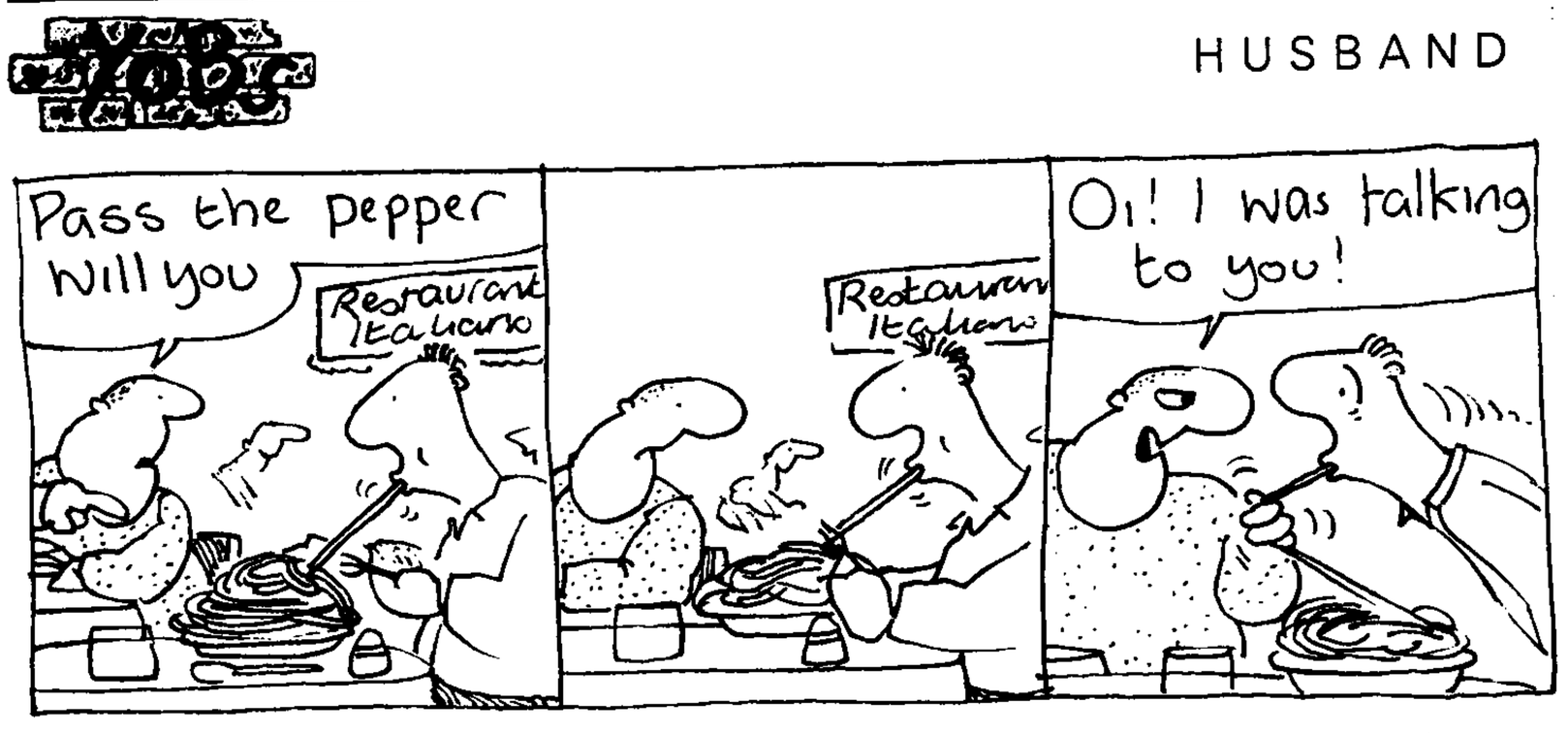
Standards have been raised so dramatically that the number of British beaches which get the coveted EC "blue flag" for cleanliness are likely to be cut to two — and perhaps none at all.

The water companies and the DoE have been partly rescued from this humiliation, however, by the Tidy Britain Group which is about to release its own set of "seaside awards". Many of the beaches where the water fails the EC standard are likely to get the TBG award to compensate. What form will the award take? A flag, like the EC one. And what colour will it be? Blue.

SOUTH WEST WATER, meanwhile, has thought up a brilliant way to disguise its huge 18 per cent rise in charges — more than four times the rate of inflation.

It is sending out bills every quarter instead of every six months; and in her letter explaining the move, a Mrs Webb from customer accounts makes a telling point: the quarterly bills will be smaller than the six-month bills.

The fact that two quarters added together will be higher than the old six-month bill will, it is hoped, escape the notice of customers who are clearly regarded by the plutocrats of South West Water as being very retarded. There must be something in the drinking water...



ROTTEN BOROUGHS

BIRMINGHAM

BIRMINGHAM'S hopes of using election night to put its brand new £50 million National Indoor Arena on the national map were cruelly dashed by the city's growing posse of blundering press officers.

The counts for all 12 of the city's parliamentary constituencies were held on the massivè arena floor with a rostrum proudly set up at one end where a huge backdrop announced "Birmingham" for the benefit of the TV cameras. Three news networks and more than 200 hacks were there to watch Britain's biggest count, shepherded by nearly all the city's 50-strong press corps.

Trouble began when the counts were held up after the van drivers assigned to pick up ballot boxes held a premature Labour party victory party — with several later losing their way to the collection points. The city's hopes of good publicity dwindled further when chief executive Roger Taylor ordered the removal of *Independent* hack Nick Cohen for daring to light a cigarette to relieve the tension. The city's welcome to the outside world was touchingly warm: Cohen's mobile phone was broken by over-eager security guards as they manhandled him out. Taylor claimed Cohen had sworn at him and then stubbed out his cigarette on the arena floor.

The delays resulted in all the counts ending at the same time. Electoral law demanded that all the announcements be made as soon as possible — which meant using the counting cubicles where no cameras or any of the 250 hacks could see them. The ensuing tidal flow of hacks rushing from cubicle to cubicle left several candidates knocked off their feet and late for their own counts. The magnificent Birmingham backdrop on the rostrum was almost totally ignored.

Director of public affairs Lynda Longbottom is now subject of yet another inquiry — and under threat of her own personal vote of no confidence.

A 15-YEAR-OLD yob has succeeded where MPs, councillors and dozens of residents failed in closing down one of Birmingham's most notorious children's homes.

Ipstones Avenue, Stechford, was the home where officers installed a satellite dish using money intended for furniture, thus giving their teenage boy residents instant access to Euro-porn. A senior officer was recently suspended there after a fight with a resident, and locals have complained incessantly about the home to social services bosses over inmates damaging cars, trespassing and threatening them.

All was to no avail until a 15-year-old boy recently climbed on to the roof and hurled dozens of tiles at passers-by, passing cars and, when they arrived, the police. Now the home is to join the ranks of other troublesome institutions such as Highgate Close, Sutton Road (see *Eyes passim*) and be shut for ever.

The same fate must surely be in store for the notorious St John's in Erdington where two social workers have been suspended. Gilbert Lewis faces an imminent disciplinary hearing over alleged visits to a former resident; and Audrey Wynter was suspended after the intervention of the city's new children's rights officer.

A SNEAKY housing scam has emerged in another "cheap homes for the rich" scandal in Birmingham.

Readers will recall how senior council officers and bigwigs wangled their way on to a secret housing list entitling them to rent luxury flats for just £50 a week. (They included social services chief Frank Reynolds and Ian Byatt, boss of the water industry watchdog, Ofwat.) Now — and much to everyone's glee — the city's "holier than thou" opposition Tories have been caught with their noses in the trough.

It has emerged that former housing chairman and lord mayor Mrs Freda Cocks netted herself a luxury flat for 16 years — whose current rent is a grand £24 a week. Not only that, but the council has even paid her compensation for having to move out!

The scam began in 1976 when the Calthorpe Estate leased a huge mansion on the Hagley Road to West Midlands county council. The county council's plans to demolish it and build a road fell through and Mrs Cocks — then housing chairman — ordered it be taken over, with £28,000 being spent to convert it into flats. Then she moved in — and she's been there ever since.

To add to local chargepayers' irritation, Mrs Cocks was one of those investigated by the district auditor in the infamous car pool saga, and it now emerges that the lease on the mansion is about to expire and that the council is liable for repairs totalling £100,000.

Mrs Cocks will not, however, be joining the city's cardboard box dwellers. The council has had to offer her compensation of £1,500 for the humiliation of moving out earlier than expected — and accepting a brand new home in upmarket Harborne.

MURKEYSIDE

REVELATIONS about the dress sense of Andrew Best, Murkeyside's chief fire officer (see *Eye* 790), have caused considerable merriment within the brigade.

When driving past a Dock Road fire station on his way to work, the CFO passed a placard bearing the legend "Lingerie Sale. For all your negligée requirements, contact Andrew Best." The chief had actually donned a basque at the notorious Blundlesands thrash, but this was April the First so the lads were entitled to a little poetic licence.

Copies of the *Eye* article were circulated at the last meeting of the Merseyside fire authority (MFA) by chairman Maurice Lee for the jollification of members. Best, meanwhile, had gone to his bolt-hole — a Tenerife timeshare — to escape the embarrassment.

He hopes the drag episode won't delay his efforts to remove the fire authority from the control of local councillors and prevent him from "rationalising" the brigade — ie sacking firemen. This partly involves scrapping the £1.5 million computer system bought from ICL at the behest of former MFA chairman Derek Hatton. Yet another apparently needless expense about to be borne by the long-suffering Murkeyside taxpayer.

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE

A BRAVE attempt by East Staffordshire council to teach Africa a thing or two about "democracy" has fallen flat thanks to developments in Blantyre, Malawi (twin town, Burton-on-Trent).

Labour-controlled East Staffs, the setting for so many dodgy land deals over the last five years (see *Eyes passim*), has changed many thousands of pounds of ratepayers' money into Malawian kwachas over the last two years to pay for a series of exotic junkets during which council leaders paraded triumphantly on Malawian national television before entertaining democracy-thirsty tribal leaders with their tales of the sophisticated life in Burton-on-Trent and Rugeley.

Alas, it now looks as if the councillors' good work was all in vain. For despite waxing ecstatic about all things East Staffordian and their love for British democracy, the Malawi government has closed down Blantyre university and shot hundreds of revolting students who were demonstrating against the ruling government's Marxist austerity.

This breakdown in authority in the "developing" east African state has severely taxed the intellects behind East Staffs' own repressive regime. They don't know whether to renounce their Malawian links or send a message of support.

BENT

THE entrepreneurial ambition of Bent Tory Leslie Winters, the council's debt-chasing press officer whose family business has just been wound up by the council for, er, non-payment of the business rate, remains as strong as ever.

Another company of which he is a director, the compassionately-named Therapeutic Homes Ltd, has annoyed many folk in Kilburn by applying to open *six* hostels for the homeless on the same street.

Although borough planning officers recommended refusal, councillors from all parties rushed to back the scheme (save for Bent Tories' sole honourable member, Peter Golds) until at the eleventh hour hundreds of furious residents besieged the planning committee.

They sported placards bearing the witty slogan "Now Is The Winters Of Our Discontent" — and they convinced councillors to turf out his applications.

Letters

Private Eye

Skully duggery

Sir,

Andrew Russell is indeed a Category A prisoner. But since his conviction he has vigorously protested his innocence, and I have no reason to doubt him.

Would it be cynical to suggest that had he been an Irish Republican prisoner, then PRIVATE LIE, *Paul Spart,* WORLD IN TRACTION *and all the other creeps would have already slung their bleeding hearts behind a "Skully Is Innocent" campaign?*

Yours, etc.,
GARRY BUSHELL,

London SE9.

Grounding a flyer

Sir,

I was intrigued to read the EYE *encouraging investigative reporters to examine the role played by Richard Branson in a recent* THIS WEEK *programme on the alleged "dirty tricks" campaign against his airline by BA (*EYE, *10 April).*

You may have been sold a "flyer".

We initially contacted Virgin to assess the strength of its case. Once satisfied we went on to uncover new evidence here and in America which seemed to support the allegations. Some of our revelations came as a surprise to Mr Branson when broadcast.

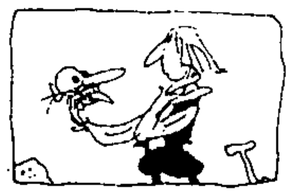
We did not offer "appearance fees" to business hacks "to appear on camera and slag off BA" because we did not approach any to do so.

British Airways was invited to be interviewed but repeatedly declined.

Yours sincerely,
PAUL WOOLWICH,

Editor "This Week", Thames Television.

IT HAS been brought to our attention that a letter published in our issue dated 28 February ("Doodles Bugged") from one Alex Standish could be construed as being defamatory of the members of staff of Crookham Court School, including Michael Gold. It was suggested in that letter that the staff ignored or condoned the criminal activities of Mr Cadman. We accept that this was not the case. Private Eye does not in this case, or any other, endorse the views of the contributors to the Letters Page.



LUVVIES

Of course I don't really want to be in Beckett. I'd much rather live like one of his characters. I so love the poor, and I want the poor to love me so much that I always keep a pound coin warm in my pocket to give to beggars. I hope that God will be pleased. More than that, I hope when I'm back in the gutter — where I really long to be — I'll be next to one of these fellows like the tramps in *Waiting For Godot* and he'll say: "You once gave me a pound coin outside Waterloo Station. It was warm. I remember you, cock."

TOM BAKER
Radio Times

Submitted by Kevin Dyball.

An occasional column featuring gems from the acting profession. £10 for entries.

Labour relations

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the astonishing resemblance between Peter Mandelson, former Kinnock acolyte, Labour image fabricator and unqualified fan of Walworth Road PR chief David Hill, and Peter Mandelson, proud new member for this town, close friend of Gordon Brown and latterday critic of Kinnock and Hill's election glitz?

Could these two pillars of rectitude, straight dealing and unswerving loyalty be in any way related?

Sincerely,
PETER BYRNE,

Hartlepool.

Choir boyo

Sir,

Mr Neil Kinnock was quoted in THE TIMES *of 28 July 1980 thus: "I want to retire at 50. I want to play cricket in the summer and geriatric football in the winter, and sing in the choir."*

Mr Kinnock is now 50.

Yours faithfully,
WILLIAM G. STEWART,

London SW15.

The road to Rio

Sir,

*Where does your Brazilian correspondent get his/her fashionably anti-road bias (*EYE *791)? For local activists to vehemently oppose the M3 extension through Twyford Down or the "C" Ring round Newark NJ may be entirely justified, but to denounce the Calha Norte and B364 as "huge road schemes" shows either stupidity and ignorance or a deliberate intention to mislead.*

"Huge" in length, maybe, these are two-lane single carriageway roads less than a fifth the width of a British motorway. They are the equivalent of a pre-war British "A" road (unfenced so as not to impede wildlife or local population) driven through land a hundred times less populated than the remotest corner of Britain.

Your correspondent also fails to mention that the new environment minister Goldenberg intends, as a scientist himself, to apply appropriate intermediate technology to benefit those of his country's citizens, such as the Yanomani people, who now have their own designated territory but lack even the most rudimentary social security. Not only loggers will use these roads.

Compromise is difficult, and makes for less titillating copy than lambasting simplistic polarities. But it should be recognised, and given credit, where identified.

Yours faithfully,
SIMON CARVALHO,

London E15.

Hawk Eye

Sir,

*British Aerospace did not sell the Saudis Hawk (**H**oming **A**ll the **W**ay **K**ill) Missiles. It sold 30 Hawk Aircraft Mk65 as part of the inter government Al Yamamah deal and hopes to sell another 65 aircraft.*

Hawk missiles come from the same stable as the Patriots, being manufactured by Raytheon. Raytheon products are seen by the defence industry as major rivals to BAe.

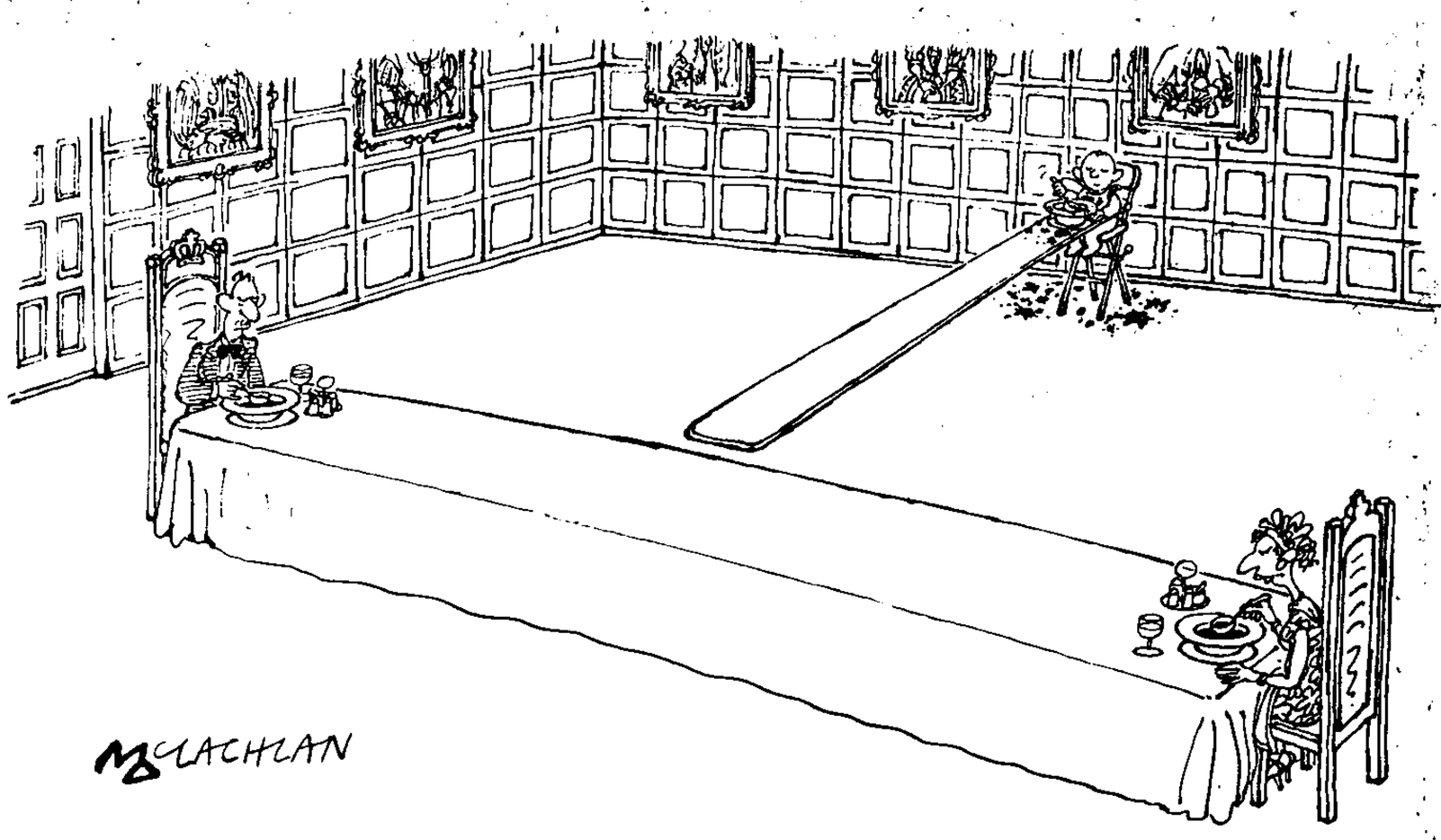
The Hawk missiles were sold to the Saudis by the American government as part of its foreign military sales programme.

Mark Thatcher is, however, Mrs Margaret Thatcher's son.

Must try harder.

Yours faithfully,
AMIN JAMEEL,

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.



Loud report

Sir,

You report my career in the House of Commons as being "mediocre". Therefore your readers will not be surprised to hear that I could only find nine mistakes in your articles on the "Supergun Affair" in your 28 February and 27 March issues.

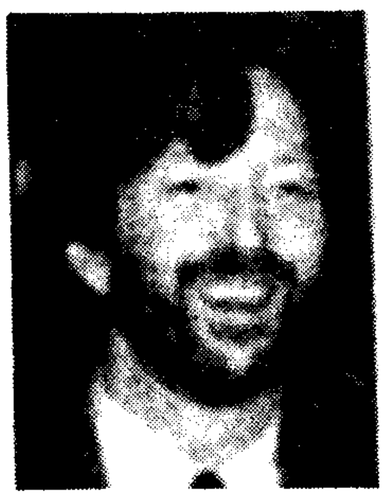
The usual fiver is offered by me to anybody who can find more.

The report was published, as promised, on 13 March.

Yours in mediocrity,
KENNETH WARREN,

Goodhurst, Kent.

Lookalike



Beadle

Clapton

Sir,

Have other readers noticed the striking resemblance between the supremely talented guitarist Eric Clapton and the absurd TV prankster, Jeremy beadle?

If they are related, I think Eric's fans should be told.

Yours sincerely,
E. BOOTH,

Bristol, Avon.

Hawking Siddelley

Sir,

I can't for the life of me understand why you have paid so much attention to the Staffordshire Moorlands in your recent election specials. I can only assume that you have been "had" by the spiteful publicity output from Christina Jebb and her team.

James Siddelley has worked extremely hard and effectively to try to win this seat for Labour, and this has shown in the halving of the Knox majority. Local people saw through Jebb's insincerity and spitefulness and I can only feel very sad that you did not.

I am proud to have worked with James Siddelley. He deserves better than this.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN PARFREYMAN,

Stoke-on-Trent.

Back-tracking

Sir,

Much to my surprise you did not publish my letter of 20 February correcting your report (Rotten Boroughs, EYE *787, Haringey) about a light rail proposal at Alexandra Park.*

What I said was this:

1 *The light rail proposal is independent of the developer's proposals for Alexandra Palace. It was in fact developed in response to residents' fears about the cars of palace visitors clogging up their streets.*

2 *There are not five miles of Alexandra Park for the light railway to run through — only about one mile. The light railway — or tram — would discreetly skirt public open spaces, running on tracks already there.*

3 *Buildings would not be "relocated", but by-passed.*

4 *Far from being "ludicrous" and "unworkable" light-rail is being adopted by cities across the world from Grenoble to Los Angeles to help prevent them being drowned in a sea of congestion and pollution.*

It is ignorant and outmoded to think of the practically silent modern tram as the clanking monster of yesteryear.

Yours sincerely,
NINA TUCKMAN,

London N19.

Sir,

The EYE *has been staunch in its defence of the environment against the road lobby and its lackeys in the department of roads. So why the campaign against trams? I'm beginning to wonder if you've been nobbled too and I think we should be told.*

Does your Cambridge correspondent think that nothing should be done about the city's traffic, or perhaps that a few useless old medieval colleges should be demolished to make way for traffic (and provide copy for Piloti!)? I mean, you can just see developers queueing up to finance the Cambridge Underground, can't you? Trams just happen to be the only AFFORDABLE *technology that offers, on the basis of international experience, some hope of attracting macho man out of his car. This is something buses can never do, even when they aren't stuck in traffic jams.*

Your Metrolink correspondent seems to have a few problems with geography. It's quite true the BR lines east and west of Manchester are linked up, but if he looks at a map he will see that these links go nowhere near the city centre, which just happens to be where most travellers want to go. It's a bit naughty blaming the system for the Government's insistence on premium fares, isn't it? There'll be premium fares on the trains too if you know what happens. The notion that we shouldn't invest until there is a government in power which will allow fare subsidies is too silly for comment.

Sincerely,
H.W. RYE,

London E17.

I-SPY

Yeovil Air Show

Submitted by John Pitfield. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Loose chippings

Sir,

To use "Bronze Age" as an adjective denoting inarticulacy (TV Eye) is surely inappropriate. Kings David and Solomon managed to express themselves clearly enough as did Moses, despite being "slow of speech and of a slow tongue" (Exodus 4, 10), Bronze Age men all.

Homer and the unknown author of the EPIC OF GILGAMESH *lived in the Bronze Age. Indeed, the period between the founding of the first cities and the rise of the Iron Age civilisation is a rich source of literature and legend.*

To compare any of the above mentioned with STUDS *contestants is rather like comparing a nuclear researcher with a Boy Scout rubbing two sticks together.*

Come on, Old Couch Potato, get your insults up to the standard your EYE *colleagues demonstrate.*

Yours faithfully,
P. ARMITAGE,

London W4.

No laughing matter

Sir,

Spike Milligan is mistaken in his belief that "Thank you very much for your support, I shall always wear it" was first used in the GOON SHOW. *Max Wall was using it in the mid-1940s and I shouldn't think it was new even then. Both Spike and your reviewer are also wrong in supposing that in my novel* UNSWEET CHARITY *I try to pass this execrable line off as my own (would anyone?) I put it in the mouth of one of my characters as an example of the kind of thing said by the kind of person who says that kind of thing. It's called characterisation.*

Yours sincerely,
KEITH WATERHOUSE,

London SW5.

Country airheads

Sir,

Your recurring Hunt News column is so tiresomely one-sided. Can we not — for a refreshing change — have derision poured on the "saboteurs" — whose enjoyment appears to involve spoiling that of others? Now that South Africa is respectable and CND outmoded, there seems little else for the airhead to do but exacerbate the age old feud between town and country.

Yours etc.,
J. ANNESLEY,

Buxton, Derbyshire.

Nose for a story

Sir,

I was intrigued to read of Graham Dudman's party-piece with a condom (EYE *791). It lends a whole new meaning to the term "dick-head".*

Yours sincerely,
RONALD W. GRAVES,

Birkenhead.

Col ELECTION balls

£10 paid for contributions

"We're not the sort of party that does deals behind smoke-filled doors."
BRIAN GOULD, ITN
(Graham Evans)

"The Conservatives fear they may be side-tracked by a storm in an egg-cup."
JOHN COLE, BBC1
(Tim Hopkins)

Q: *Which of these words do you think best sums up your character?*
Paddy Ashdown: *"Er... perhaps 'decisive'?"*
Channel 4
(David Culley)

"... and now the declaration from Berwick-upon-Tweed, Britain's most northerly constituency."
DAVID DIMBLEBY, BBC1
(Gordon Graham)

"We said zero, and I think any statistician will tell you that, when you're dealing with very big numbers, zero must mean plus or minus a few."
WILLIAM WALDEGRAVE
(Alex Norton)

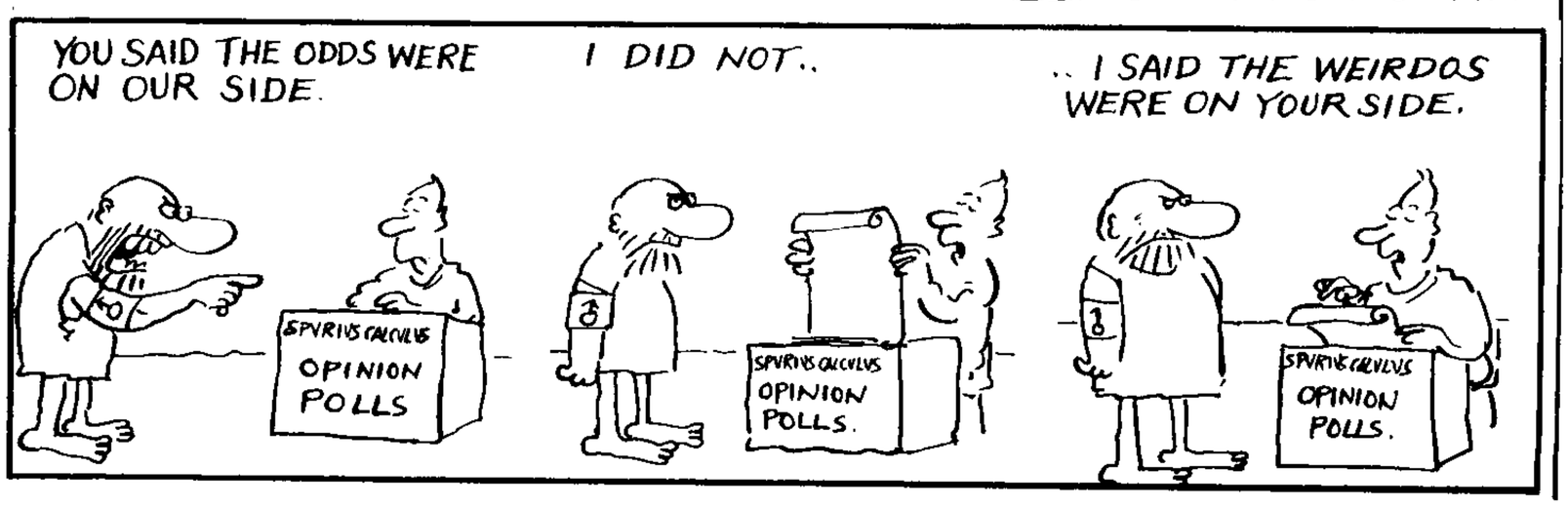
"Let me explain, Nick — it is the key which turns the door in the lock."
PADDY ASHDOWN, Radio 4
(Michael White)

"The British public sees with blinding clarity."
MICHAEL HESELTINE, Radio 4
(Bill Philpot)

"I was polled on the amount of radio I watched..."
EMMA FREUD, GLR
(Martin Bradley)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN



Letter From Canada

from Our Own Correspondent

ACCORDING to our national anthem, our country is the True North Strong and Free. But nobody today feels very strong, and in an obsessive nanny state with absurd no-drinking or smoking laws, few feel very free either.

To compound it all, bankers and shareholders of the decaying Reichmann business empire met in Toronto for crisis talks last week. If the Reichmanns do bite the dust, the recession here will become almost overwhelming.

As Canada's business suzerains gathered in Toronto, our political leaders met in Ottawa to try to save the constitution — and the very composition of the country. There were no smiles. From *Great Expectations* to *Hard Times*...

Ours is a country of used car salesman politicians, with a House of Commons bursting with plump men in large-lapelled check jackets and bad toupees. Parliamentary debates have been televised for some time on a station known as Wally-World. Matters are so bad — and so petty — that a nest of political corruption was recently exposed involving ludicrous bribes of free fridges and other electrical household appliances. On another occasion a leading MP was charged with the theft of contact lens solution from a shop. Glamorous and scintillating? You bet.

Luckily there are more than enough political parties to liven things up. Five have substantial representation: the sort-of liberal Progressive Conservatives, New Democratic Party and the Liberals; and the sort-of fascist Reform Party and the Bloc Quebecois. The next hung parliament will be a liberal-fascist alliance.

The current Tory government under the well-lubricated Brian Mulroney has a full 14 percent support in the polls (16 percent of Canadians believe Elvis Presley is still alive). Mulroney has resorted to drink and the media exploitation of his pouting wife and daughter to see him through the next election. However, so crass was his use of daughter Caroline that the satirical magazine *Frank* ran a mock "Deflower Caroline Contest" for Young Conservatives.

The big question is whether Canada will even exist in the long term. Quebec has been playing up for years, but now a recession-linked nationalism makes separation appear very likely. The boys in Quebec City are not renowned for their enlightened views, and the ultra-nationalists frequently let anti-semitic remarks slip in public in their appallingly accented French. In a manic effort to save their language and culture they will only allow immigration from French-speaking nations — that is, every other dictatorship in the world — and offer munificent financial gifts to Quebecois mothers willing to stay at home and have extravagant numbers of offspring — the National Socialists, of course, only gave a favoured *Hausfrau* a shiny red medal.

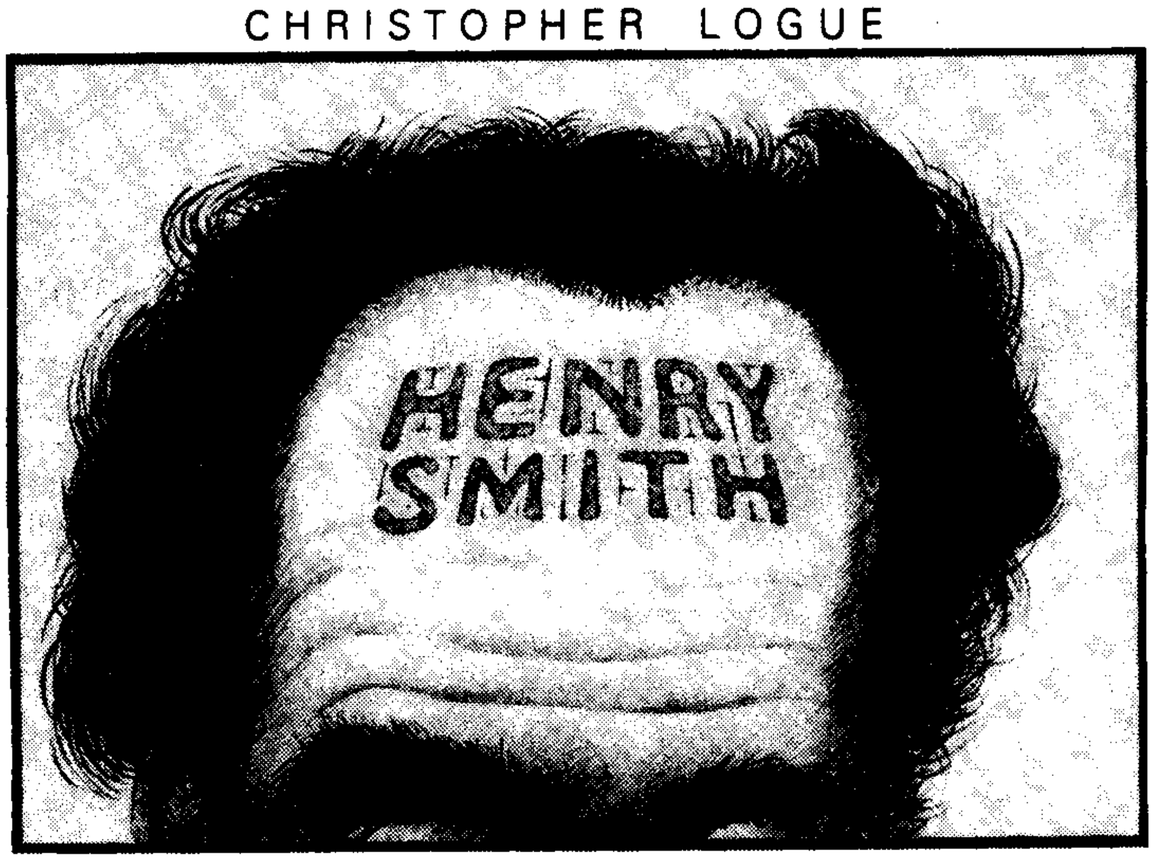
The language law is so oppressive in the province it is illegal to display any English at all on public signs. The government has refused to place preservation orders on any buildings in the English quarter, resulting in the destruction of some beautifully and historically important architecture. Even if we English-Canadians speak fluent French we are not accepted as authentic Quebecers. Hence the English leave in droves and Quebec drowns in parochial and bigoted complacency.

Yet if it does leave our confederation, we in English Canada will be in deep trouble. "What is the difference between Canada and the United States?" The answer is "Quebec". Without bilingualism and the French dimension we will be open to decay, with individual provinces asking why they are still part of this enormous country. Nor are we renowned for our sense of identity.

Our nationalism hasn't worked. We have expunged the British connection as fast as possible and now make it almost impossible for British people to emigrate to Canada, and we also claim to hate and despise the Yankees. Yet we have in most respects gulped down the American dream without checking the contents. Unless we are very careful it might soon be time to pay the price.

CHRISTOPHER LOGUE

TRUE STORIES



Illuminated by BERT KITCHEN

RETURNING *from an African trip to promote his book* *Inside The Firm*, Mr Anthony Lambrianou, a former colleague of the Kray brothers, said:

"I was greeted with cheers by a class of Masai children. It was amazing. When I asked them if they knew about Ron and Reg, they gave a great cheer. Then I read them the passage about how I revealed the whereabouts of Jack McVitie's corpse — and they danced about for joy. I only has a few copies of *Inside The Firm* with me, but I handed them out to two little boys who wanted to be renamed Ron and Reg. It made them incredibly happy. I could have handed out thousands of copies."

IN HER statement to the Christian Advertising Association, Mrs Emily Pearson said: "I was teatime viewing a nature show about dolphins when the break came and I found myself looking at a ruined grave out of which worms were crawling onto a broken cross. Over this a deep male voice boomed: 'If you die without God — you're stuffed, stuffed, STUFFED!'

"Then the image changed to a writhing foetus, and the voice said: 'Where would you be if your mother had had an abortion?' Finally there was a shot of a great bell tolling, and the voice said: 'Better find yourself in church — or you'll find yourself in hell.' "

Speaking for the Union of Australian Worshippers, Mr Greg Gardiner said: "We count the ad a winner. It's the first time we have attracted a Parental Guidance Recommendation."

DURING her interview, Ms Sabrina Firm said: "I suppose I am partly to blame, but I told Henry I would leave him unless we could have a colour TV. So he went out and came back with a stereo set wrapped up in a tea-towel.

"I was just telling him that I didn't like stereo when the police charged in and arrested Henry for theft. When he had been taken away, one of the officers explained that they had caught him quickly because — as, of course, I knew — Henry has his name, Henry Smith, tattooed in capital letters across his forehead and had taken a taxi home with the stereo and told the driver: 'You have seen nothing — OK? You have not seen Henry Smith.' "

WHILE he was giving the Obayashi Corporation's on-site work for a talk on industrial safety, a piece of concrete the size of a laptop computer fell from the 20th floor of the uncompleted Savu Towers Hotel onto the head of Mr Tsutoma Hirata (40), a safety engineering expert, and killed him.

MEDICAID officials in Michigan have decided to cut back the number of free condoms given to individuals too poor to buy their own from 24 per day to two per month.

Mr Randy Pope, Michigan's State Public Health Manager, said: "The cutback resulted from an in-depth survey that revealed that the poor were selling their free condoms to teenagers at all-night parties. It will be a bad thing. Studies show that the poor have sex up to twenty times a day. There will be more and more of them."

ALTHOUGH her bridegroom-to-be, Mr Cunkottuveettil Sivankutty, electrocuted himself while ironing his wedding suit on the eve of the ceremony, his bride, Uskakumary Kalayapuram, was not disappointed as her uncle's son, Sugathan Pathanapuram, married her in the appointed place and at the appointed time, instead.

INFORMATION: East London Advertiser 14.12.91; Queensland Courier Mail 17.2.92; Yorkshire Post 25.1.92; Straits Times 13.2.92; Anchorage Daily News 15.9.91; Indian Express 25.2.92.

MONITORS: Edward Hagger, Norman Reynolds, Peter Quinn, S. Thornton, J.A.E. Young, Michael Crapper.

Huge eruption threatens to engulf nation

by Our Seismographical Staff
Volcan O'Booze

AS millions watched in horror last night, the inevitable happened. Mount Gutta erupted, sending forth a vast uncontrollable flood of filth and slime that looked as if it would cover the entire country.

Billions of tons of noxious gases were thrown up into the air as an unstoppable torrent of drivel poured relentlessly from Mount Gutta's gaping mouth.

Vote Conservative

Said one scientist: "The pattern is very familiar now. Mt Gutta rumbles for four or five years and then once an election is called it just blows its top."

As rescue workers desperately worked round the clock to control the tide of scummy debris, Mt Gutta claimed its first victim — named as a Mr Neil Kinnock, 50, from Wales.

Mr Kinnock was found buried up to his neck in mud. One volunteer said: "He never stood a chance."

"It's an accident just waiting to happen"

The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47¾

Thursday — Polling Day

Today is the big day! I have to decide which way to vote. Having carefully considered all the options, I have come to the conclusion that I will vote Conservative! When my wife Norman and I arrive at the polling station in Huntingdon, the press men are waiting. "How are you going to vote?" they all shout. "Labour," said Norman, in one of her very good jokes. Then they asked me and I said "I am going to vote for the winning side." "He's Labour too," said Norman, in another of her jokes. Inside the polling booth, in fact it was a very easy choice. My name was on the paper in large blue letters, but Mr Kinnock's was not. This shows that he cannot possibly win in my judgement.

Later we went back to London, and outside Downing Street there were a number of large vans, marked "Removals". "It must be something to do with the television," I told Norman. She seemed very confused by all this media attention, and I heard her say to one of the drivers "Can you be careful with the tea chest marked 'Crockery'?"

To relax we went next door to a drinks party with Mr Lamont. I had the feeling that someone had died, because everyone in the room looked very sad, and Norma himself kept talking about "a tragic loss". Other people reassured him there was nothing anyone could have done, as whoever it was had been "a hopeless case".

However after a few drinks they all went into the next room to watch the television. Since it was already 11 o'clock, I thought it was high time that Norman and I went home to bed. "I've got a lot to do in the morning," I told our host. "Not necessarily you haven't," said Mr Waldegrave, who happened to be standing nearby. I think he may have had too many of Mr Lamont's special "Double Whammy" cocktails.

Friday

When I woke up I turned on my bedside radio and heard Mr Redhead saying that I had won the election.

Norma was already up and when I went downstairs I found her unpacking lots of boxes marked "Kitchen", "Dining Room" and "Lounge". There is no doubt that she has been under a lot of stress in the last few weeks. Then there was a ring at the door and in walked my friend Chris. "Isn't it satisfactory news?" I said. "It has all gone exactly as I hoped." Then I noticed that he was crying, and Mr O'Donnell explained that unfortunately Chris could no longer be my friend, as he had lost his seat. "I am very sorry," I said, "but I am afraid that there is no place for losers in my new government." Chris gave me what may well be the last of his funny looks.

Saturday morning

I am my own man at last! That is what it says in a very interesting article in the *Daily Telegraph* by Mr O'Donnell under the pseudonym Charles Moore. Now I can choose my own cabinet. The minor appointments were easy. I have decided that Norma Lamont should stay as Chancellor of the Exchequer, as a reward for his success in getting the country out of recession. Mr Hurd will have to stay on as Foreign Secretary, because he is the only one who knows where all the countries are without looking at the map. David Mellor came in to say that he would like to be Minister for Free Tickets to all the things we go to together, such as football matches and cricket, not to mention operas which Norman likes. "Oh yes," I said. "That is the sort of fresh thinking we are going to have from now on."

Then Mr Baker came in, and giving me his considerably annoying smile, he said "A million congratulations, John, we owe it all to your brilliant leadership. What would you like me to do?"

"I would like you to resign," I said, giving him a smile of my own! "The time has come to clear out all the dull men in glasses whom Mrs Thatcher appointed to suck up to her."

Saturday afternoon

Next to come in was Mr Heseltine who for some reason was looking very depressed. I thought I would cheer him up by saying that I was going to give him the job he had always wanted. "I doubt it," he said, looking even more depressed.

Then came the bit I was really going to enjoy most, when Mr Waldegrave arrived. He looked very considerably nervous, and said "I know what you're going to say, prime minister. I entirely accept that you had no alternative but to sack me."

"Oh no," I said. "I've got something much better up my sleeve for you than that. Something which really matches up to all your talents. You are to take charge of a new department, where you will have the very important job of answering the telephone to all the people who ring up to complain about their trains being late. And in addition I want you to take full responsibility for making the tea when really important people like the new Health Secretary come round." "And who is he?" asked Mr Waldegrave. "Wrong as usual," I said. "He is Mrs Bottomley, a woman who is going places or as Mr Lamont puts it 'a real little goer'."

After he had gone, I had quite a good laugh. Oh yes. It is fun being prime minister.

Monday

One woman who will not be hearing from me again ever is That Woman I Don't Mention. Oh no! She has been telling all the American papers that *she* won the election. All she did was to give one speech saying I should be Prime Minister. She is completely mad! The whole idea was my former friend Chris Patten's and it clearly did not work as we won anyway. No wonder Chris lost his seat.

Mr Hurd suggested he should go to Hong Kong. He said: "Mr Patten's talent might be exercised in losing a whole colony rather than just a constituency." It was a joke that, for a change, I found not inconsiderably amusing.

PILGRIMS FLOCK TO WEMBLEY FOR EASTER MESSAGE

by Our Religious Staff **David Bowie-Our-Heads-In-Prayer**

Millions of pilgrims from all over the world frocked *(shurely 'flocked'? Ed)* to Wembley yesterday to hear the traditional Easter message from the Pop.

On easter Monday, or the Feast of St Frederick of Mercury, as it is more correctly known, the assembled worshippers heard a series of messages from some of the most religious figures in sex, drugs and rock and roll.

St George Michael and the Drag Act

"Freddie is not dead but lives on through his music," preached the Very Reverend Elizabeth Taylor. "He is with us tonight," spake Her Grace Annie Lennox. "Don't forget he was absolutely divine," intoned His Holiness Elton John.

The Loafers and the Fishnets

During the seven-hour service, beamed by satellite to billions of the faithful all over the world, the congregation sang hymns associated with St Frederick such as *I Want It Now, We Are The Champions* and the deeply spiritual *Bohemian Rhapsody* with its moving concluding final verse "Nothing really matters to me."

In a dedication to the life and work of St Frederick a number of miracles were performed, including the resurrection of Liza Minnelli and the late Roger Daltrey from the Whohe.

Sir Robert Geldof is 40.

Easter TV Choice

Joan Bakewell Tart interviews a controversial Church of England priest who believes in God.

BAKEWELL: So you believe that Christ was in some way God?

PRIEST: Yes.

BAKEWELL: Don't you think your congregation would be very shocked if they knew that?

PRIEST: Well, yes, but nowadays, you know, things are different; there is more tolerance towards minority views like mine.

BAKEWELL: You believe in the Resurrection, don't you?

PRIEST: Er, I suppose I do really.

BAKEWELL: Many of your parishioners might find that offensive.

PRIEST: Well, I hope I have the support of my bishop.

BISHOP OF DURHAM *(for it is he)*: No you don't. You're fired.

BAKEWELL: Goodnight and God bless.

POETRY CORNER

In Memoriam Frankie Howerd and Benny Hill

So. Farewell
Then

Benny Hill.

You did not
Have a
Catchphrase.

"Titter ye
Not."

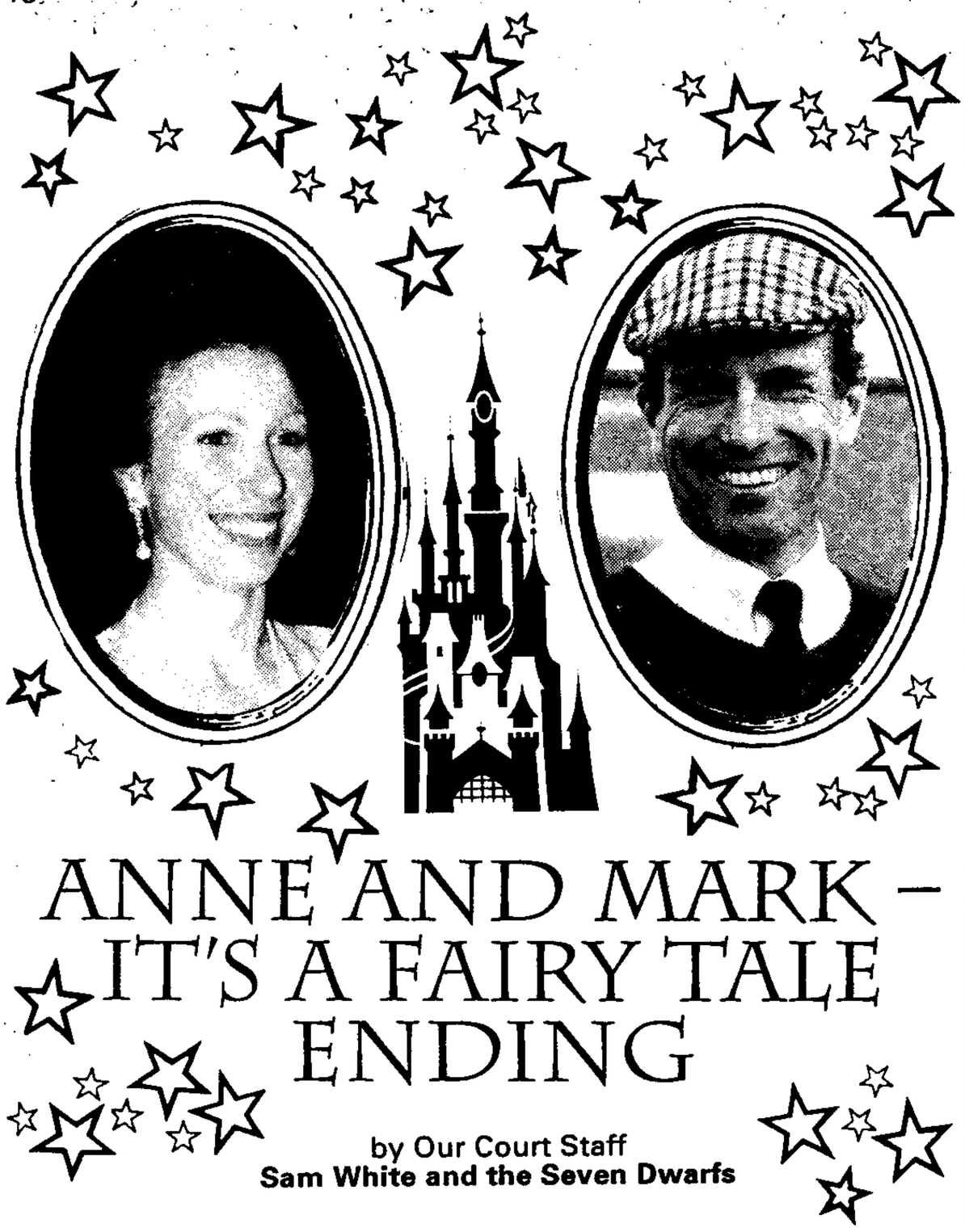
That was
Frankie Howerd's.

No, we shall
Not titter on
This solemn
Occasion.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

Tales from HisTory Central Office No. 94

Robin Hood
Deep in Sherwood Forest...
Halt! I am Robin Hood. I take from the rich and give to the poor
What? Redistribution of wealth? That's an utterly unworkable political philosophy
I claim these gold sovereigns for the poor and needy
Typical. Penalising the entrepreneur. There's nothing wrong with wealth creation, you know
Later...
Goodly poor folk, I bring you gold to help the sick, the elderly and the oppressed!
No thanks! It says here that poverty is a worldwide problem. You can't blame the feudal system for 12th century global problems
Nottingham Express
YE Nottingham mail
Gentle people, let me lead you to a fairer and more caring England...
Sounds like the Dark Ages of discontent
Besides, the Sheriff of Nottingham's got a lot of experience of government. You've never been Sheriff, have you?
But...
Yeah. And we don't hear much about Will Scarlett these days, do we? He's been kept under wraps.
Nottingham Sunne
Yeah. And apparently you do whatever Maid Marion says. And she's a witch. Definitely.
So, shall we rise up and throw out the Evil King John with his Magna Charters?
No, we'll string you up instead. Bloody proto-socialist
Hoorah! Another five centuries of despotism!
Ye End



ANNE AND MARK – IT'S A FAIRY TALE ENDING

by Our Court Staff
Sam White and the Seven Dwarfs

CHURCH bells rang out all over Britain last night, and old age pensioners wept with joy in the streets following the announcement that the Princess Royal is to divorce the dashing young man of her dreams, Captain Mark Phillips.

"We have sacrificed everything for our children," said a smiling Princess Anne. "Particularly our marriage."

Mark Plunges to New Low

The royal couple's plans to divorce are the latest chapter in a story-book romance that began more than 20 years ago.

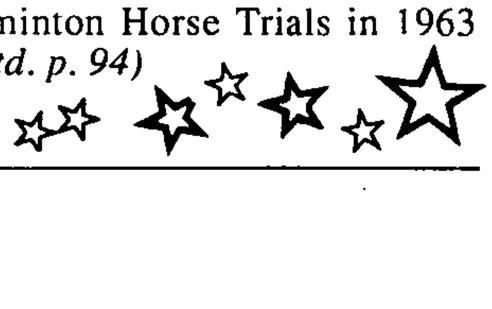
"It was love at first sight," recalled one Palace insider last night. "And since then it has burgeoned into a deep and lasting hatred."

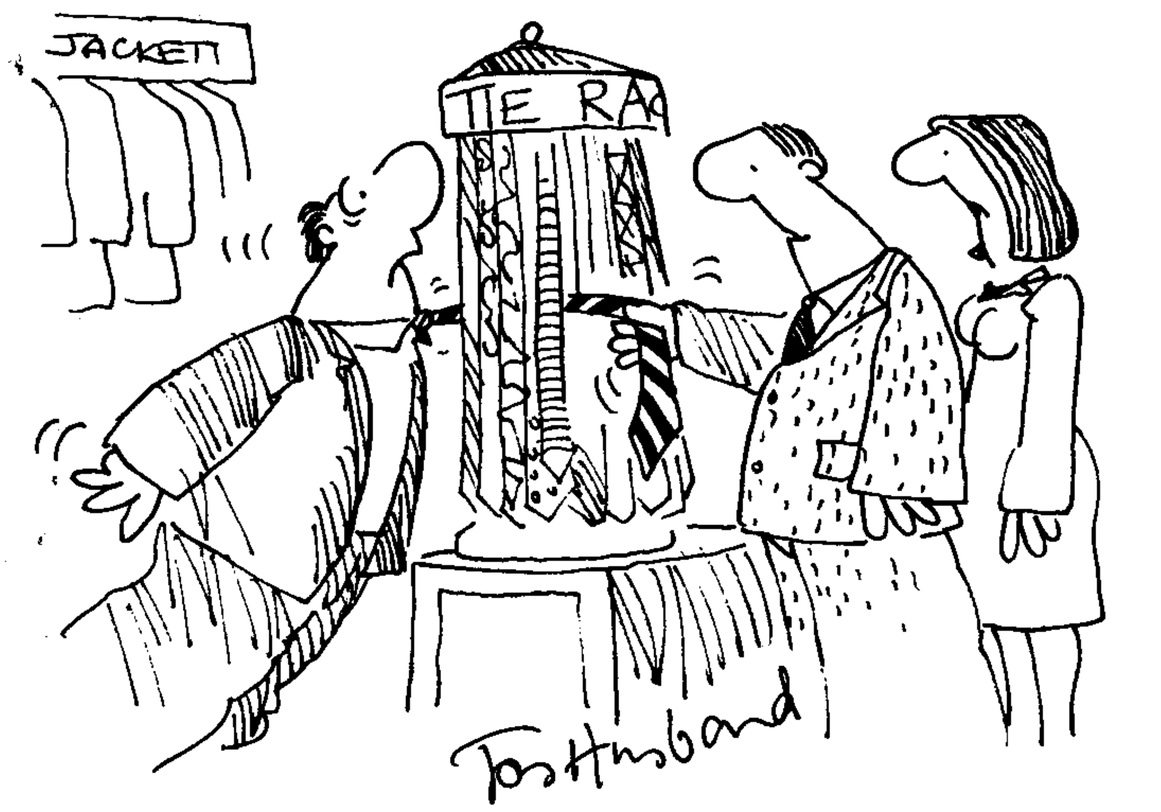
The couple had everything in common — horses, their deep love for equestrian sports, a passionate interest in 3-day eventing and, perhaps, above all, horses.

As Mr Mandela said last night, with tears in his eyes: "I am deeply in love with my wife, and, now we have agreed to part, we are planning to see more and more of each other before the police come to arrest her."

The Mandelas first met at the Badminton Horse Trials in 1963

(contd. p. 94)





"Mmm... I like this one"

IN THE COURTS

Lane One Acquitted

The case of Lord Lane v. The Media before the Master of the Rolls, Lord Donaldson.

THE Lord Chief Justice, the so-called "Lord Lane One", was today found innocent of all charges in a hearing lasting only two minutes.

Lord Donaldduck said that he had given very careful attention to none of the evidence and had no hesitation in concluding that his old friend Lord Lane was a very good chap, whom he often saw in the club.

Lord Lane had been found guilty by the press on several hundred charges of seeking to pervert the course of justice, through his incompetence, complacency, blindness and arrogance, between the years 1981 and 1991.

Lord Donaldson stated that it was abundantly clear that there had been "a gross miscarriage of justice" and that the evidence produced against the convicted Lord Chief Justice had been "falsified in a deliberate attempt to incriminate an innocent judge, whose only failing was his desire to see as many people in prison as possible."

New forensic evidence had been presented to the court in the form of the "Donaldson Test", by which a large bucket of whitewash was poured over the head of the Lord Chief Justice, proving beyond a peradventure that he was a wise and saintly fellow who was excellent company over lunch at the Garrick.

Lord Donaldson ordered that the entire British press should be locked up for daring to criticise a member of the judiciary. He refused leave to appeal.

That Garrick Luncheon in full

Yard Swoop du Jour
or
Slices of Birming Ham (6)

— ❋ —

Roast Pheasant Well Hung
By The Neck Until Dead
or
"A Wing" Chicken with Black Cap Mushrooms

— ❋ —

Guildford Petit Fours
or
Appeal Turnover

— ❋ —

Served with Bread Master of the Rolls,
Butter Up The Judge and Hard Cheese

HEIR OF SORROWS

BY

SYLVIE KRIN

THE STORY SO FAR: Having watched the election coverage, the next morning Charles visits his mother with renewed hope...

Now read on...

"YOU SEE, Mater, it's democracy. Er... the good of the people... time for a change, as Mr Kinnock put it." Charles followed his mother as, armed with her Callard & Bowser secateurs (a gift from the Emperor Sottovochi bearing the legend BUY JAPANESE), she patrolled the Windsor Castle rose bed, pausing from time to time to snip the already burgeoning buds.

"Pick up those prunings will you, Charles, and put them in the black plastic bag."

Obediently he bent down and, grasping the discarded cuttings, felt a sharp stab of pain in his finger tips. Manfully suppressing a cry of anguish, he dropped the blood-specked twigs into his mother's container.

"You see, Mater," Charles persevered, "we do live in a democracy, as I was saying just a moment ago. And the whole idea is that you get new people to sort of take over when everyone feels that the old ones are not up to it."

The Queen snipped expertly at the straggling branches of the *Molly Parkin* floribunda which arched over the flowerbed.

"This one looks very dead. Quite useless in fact. I'll have to ask Weidenfeld to dig it out and burn it."

Charles nodded in agreement and walked on ahead of her as she turned her attention to a neat row of lemon-yellow *Jason Donovan* hybrid roses with their pink shoots already responding to the warmth of the unusually bright April sunshine.

"Yes, that's it, Mater," cried Charles. "Cut off the old ones and let the new growth come forth. As my old friend Sir Laurens put it in his book *Gardening in the Sahara Desert*, 'out of the dead oak, comes the live acorn', or could it be the other way round? ... but the point is that in every aspect of life a sort of renewal thingie is the key."

As he was speaking Charles was aware of a pungent odour wafting up from where he was standing. As he looked down he saw to his dismay that his immaculate Fry and Laurie county brogues were deep in a pile of freshly laid mulch.

"Urghh!" he exclaimed.

"Don't fuss, Charles," said his mother with a wry twinkle. "And anyway, I thought you liked all that organic stuff."

"Oh yes, yes, I do." Charles tried to suppress his revulsion as he stared at his dung-encrusted footwear, but, undeterred, pursued his train of thought.

"Take this election thingie... it has sort of caught the mood of the nation. It's sunny, it's spring, everyone's waking up to a new world, a world of change and promise and vision... not that the old aren't respected... quite the contrary... very well catered for but, er... where was I?"

"Have you got a match, Charles. I feel like a bit of a burn-up with all these twigs and things," said the Queen.

Charles reached in his pocket for his EuroDisney lighter, sent to him by TV's Matthew Kelly who had performed the opening ceremony on the television which Diana had so much enjoyed.

After several attempts with the lighter, the bonfire flared up and within seconds the pile of dry garden refuse blazed merrily, crackling and spitting with unrestrained bonhomie, like an eruption of fiery red emeralds rocketing into the empyrean *(get on with it — Ed)*.

"You see, there it is again, out of the useless old wood and so on comes this vigorous, lively fire. It's just like with Mr Kinnock, who is a fiery Welshman as indeed am I, you know Prince of Wales and all that, and you can see the parallels everywhere... it all fits together... Britain really voted for this new feeling when it chose Mr Kinnock... er..."

"What time did you go to bed, Charles?"

His mother stopped in her tracks and turned to quiz her son.

"Well, late actually, about eleven. Diana was just on her way out to some disco at the Savoy I think. Anyway the exit poll chaps had made it clear. The old lot were out, the new man was in."

The Queen stared at her son in disbelief.

"No wonder we called you Charlie. Your father and I stayed up all night. It was all very gratifying. No change at all." She prodded the fire with a rake. "Continuity, you see, that's what people want. Conservatism, old values, familiar faces."

At that point the wind swung round, blowing a thick black cloud of smoke in Charles's direction, engulfing him completely in a cloak of acrid fumes.

(To be continued)

THE Sun

FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 1992 25p

REMEMBER!
There's more rubbish
in The Sun

BUGGER OFF YOU BALD BASTARD!

by Kelvin McFilth

NEIL KINNOCK is trying to make out that the Sun conducted a campaign against him and made him lose the election.

Wot a load of bollox, quite frankly. Admittedly, we urged our readers to vote Conservative but, as none of them can read, it is absurd to suggest that anything we write can influence them in any way. We have always been totally fair to Kinnock, despite his being a KGB homosexual childkiller and a Welsh wanker to boot. So shut your gob, boyo, and get your facts right.

How we had nothing to do with it. The Sun's headline yesterday which proves Kinnock is lying

On other pages

Arise, Sir Kelvin! p2

The barest Lady Olga Maitland p3

"How I got it right about the Election"
by Richard Littlework p6

Ooh! La! La! The Sex Secrets of the Euro-Disney Lovelies! p8

How you know John Smith is useless -
10 Tell-tale Signs p9

"We were bonking when the Big Bang went off" confesses city couple p27

DIMBLEBY RESIGNS — SNOW FOLLOWS

by Our Political Staff
Jane Thynne-Week

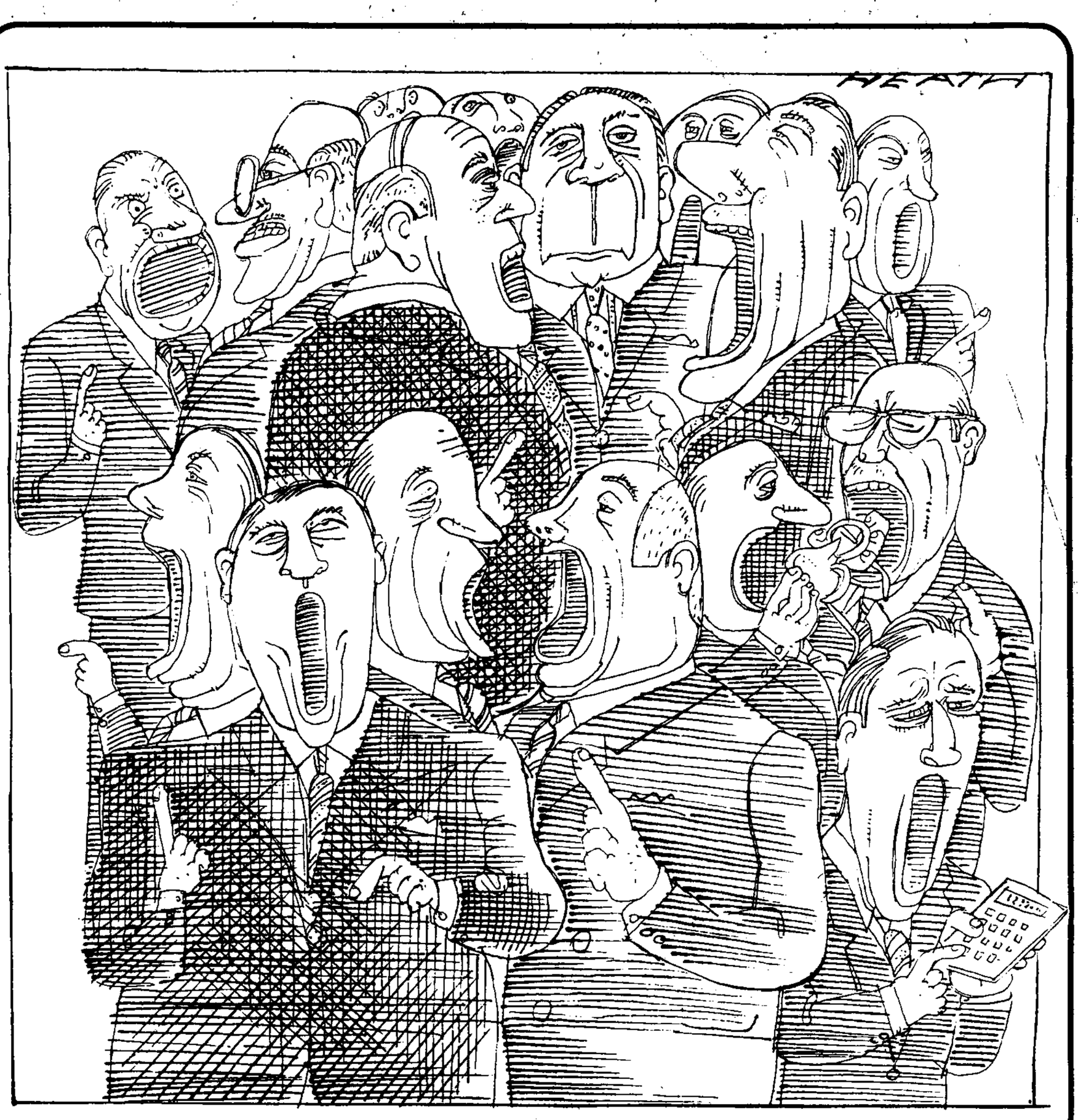
DAVID Dimbleby, the leader of the BBC, has announced his decision to resign following his disastrous performance in the General Election.

His co-partner in what was once described as the "Bad Dream Ticket", Mr Peter Snow, will also quit television.

In a sad but dignified speech, Mr Dimbleby said that in the light of the humiliation of 9 April, his position was no longer tenable and it would now be up to someone else to fight the battle against the equally abysmal ITV, led by Jon Snow.

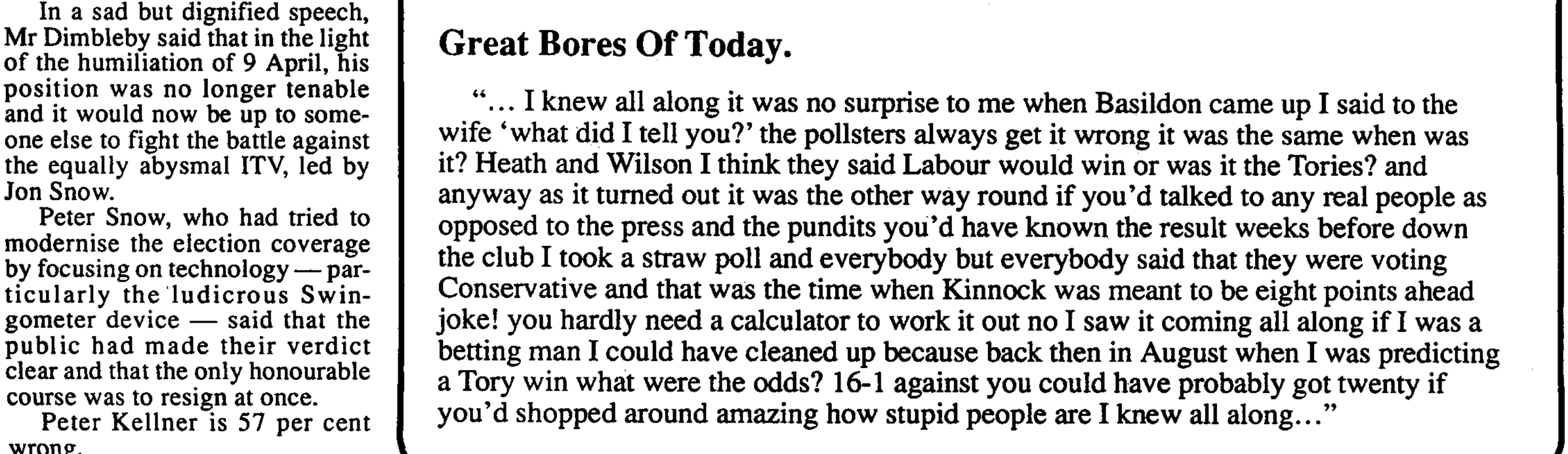
Peter Snow, who had tried to modernise the election coverage by focusing on technology — particularly the ludicrous Swingometer device — said that the public had made their verdict clear and that the only honourable course was to resign at once.

Peter Kellner is 57 per cent wrong.



Great Bores Of Today.

"... I knew all along it was no surprise to me when Basildon came up I said to the wife 'what did I tell you?' the pollsters always get it wrong it was the same when was it? Heath and Wilson I think they said Labour would win or was it the Tories? and anyway as it turned out it was the other way round if you'd talked to any real people as opposed to the press and the pundits you'd have known the result weeks before down the club I took a straw poll and everybody but everybody said that they were voting Conservative and that was the time when Kinnock was meant to be eight points ahead joke! you hardly need a calculator to work it out no I saw it coming all along if I was a betting man I could have cleaned up because back then in August when I was predicting a Tory win what were the odds? 16-1 against you could have probably got twenty if you'd shopped around amazing how stupid people are I knew all along..."


FLIPPIN' HECK! DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE, PIXIE FROU-FROU?
SKIP
SKIP
GOODNESS GRACIOUS ME. I CAN'T BELIEVE MY EYES! NOW LOOK OVER THERE.
BOUND
CAN YOU SEE WHAT I SEE? A GREAT BIG MICKEY MOUSE PRANCING UP TOWARDS US...
YEAH. CALM DOWN, DADDY. OF COURSE I CAN SEE HIM.
PHEW. I'M A MARTYR TO BLOOMIN' ACID FLASHBACKS YOU KNOW...

'I BLAME VOTERS' says KINNOCK

by Our Political Staff
Sir Morrie Poll

IN a moving and dignified farewell speech, Labour leader Neil Kinnock yesterday announced his resignation in front of a specially invited audience of media celebrities.

Said Mr Kinnock: "I do not wish in any way to seek to sound a note of casting aspersions or making excuses for our great victory — for, whatever else happened on 9 April 1992, and whatever the history books may record, there can be no doubt, as the nation saw with its own eyes, the only real winner of this election was the Labour Party.

FESTER

"This is no time for petty recriminations or bitterness," he continued. "But the fact remains that we were stabbed in the back by all those bastards in the Tory tabloids and my wife Glenys has been subjected to a campaign of round-the-clock vilification which, frankly, has had no parallel in the entire history of the *(contd p.94)*

"I preferred it before the lions went vegetarian"

Large numbers of men in suits get each others' jobs

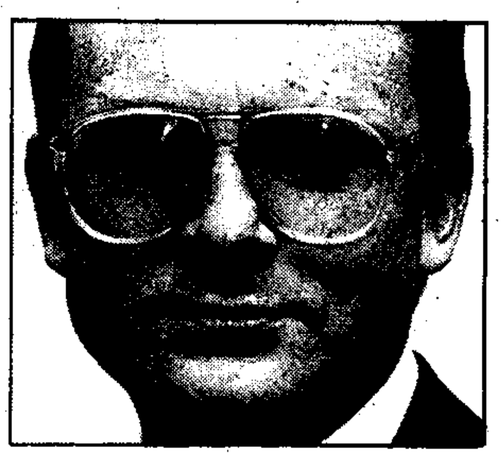
by Our Political Staff
A.N. Watneys

IN WHAT was hailed as the biggest reshuffle since Lord Liverpool introduced his famous "government of none of the talents" in 1823, Mr John Major last night announced his government.

Who are they, the men and women who will be putting their stamp on the Britain of the 1990s?

Among the high-fliers who have at last won promotion after years in the wilderness under Mrs Thatcher are:

Stephen Dotterell, 46, who takes over the key role of Chief Financial Under-Secretary at the Ministry of Windows and Privet Hedges. Educated at Malmesbury and Stafford, Dotterell is a new broom who will sweep away the old broom, Sir Hector Broom, 79, who is retiring to spend more time with his three dogs.



Hector McNorris, 43, a controversial new figure in the Scottish Office, who won plaudits at the 1973 party conference when he made a speech urging delegates to vote Conservative. McNorris, a former barrister, read law at Jessop College, New Zealand, lives in Esher and is married with two wives *(shurely 'children'? Ed).*

Bunter Soames, 44 stone, who wins his first promotion at the Ministry of Food and Drink, has long been known in the Commons for his larger-than-life stomach, and his deep love of food, not to mention drink.

The Woman, 36, has been given her very important Cabinet post because she is a woman. Otherwise little seems known of her.

Norris McHector, 42, who steps up to the key post of parliamentary under-secretary at the new "heritage" Ministry of National Lotteries and Theme Parks. McHector has long been a passionate believer in heritage, and believes that the government has a key role to play in ensuring a more caring heritage policy in the Britain of tomorrow. He is a keen collector of suits and was a lifelong subscriber to *Punch* magazine.

LABOUR'S CHOICE

The Great Labour Leadership Battle – how it works

by **Peter Jenkins**
(winner of Granada's Most Boring Columnist Award, 1971-1992)

LABOUR'S new election procedure may seem complicated, but to anyone as intelligent as myself it is perfectly simple.

1. The electoral college which chooses the new leader is voted for by Labour MPs (23%), all members of the Labour Party (18%), and five trade union leaders (87%).

2. Each candidate has to be nominated by a minimum of 21% of the Labour MPs in the House of Commons, or one trade union leader.

3. To ensure the maximum degree of democracy, the voting procedure shall take place over a period of not less than seven months — or three weeks, if the five trade union leaders agree that this might help Mr John Smith to win.

4. The trade union leaders shall be bound to carry out the fullest possible consultation procedure with their members on a one man-no vote basis, to ensure that Mr John Smith shall be the choice of the largest number of trade union members (100%).

5. Should the leading candidate, Mr John Smith, fail to win a clear majority on the first ballot, a special electoral conference shall be convened to declare the election null and void, and to draw up a new electoral college, consisting, for convenience, of five trade union leaders.

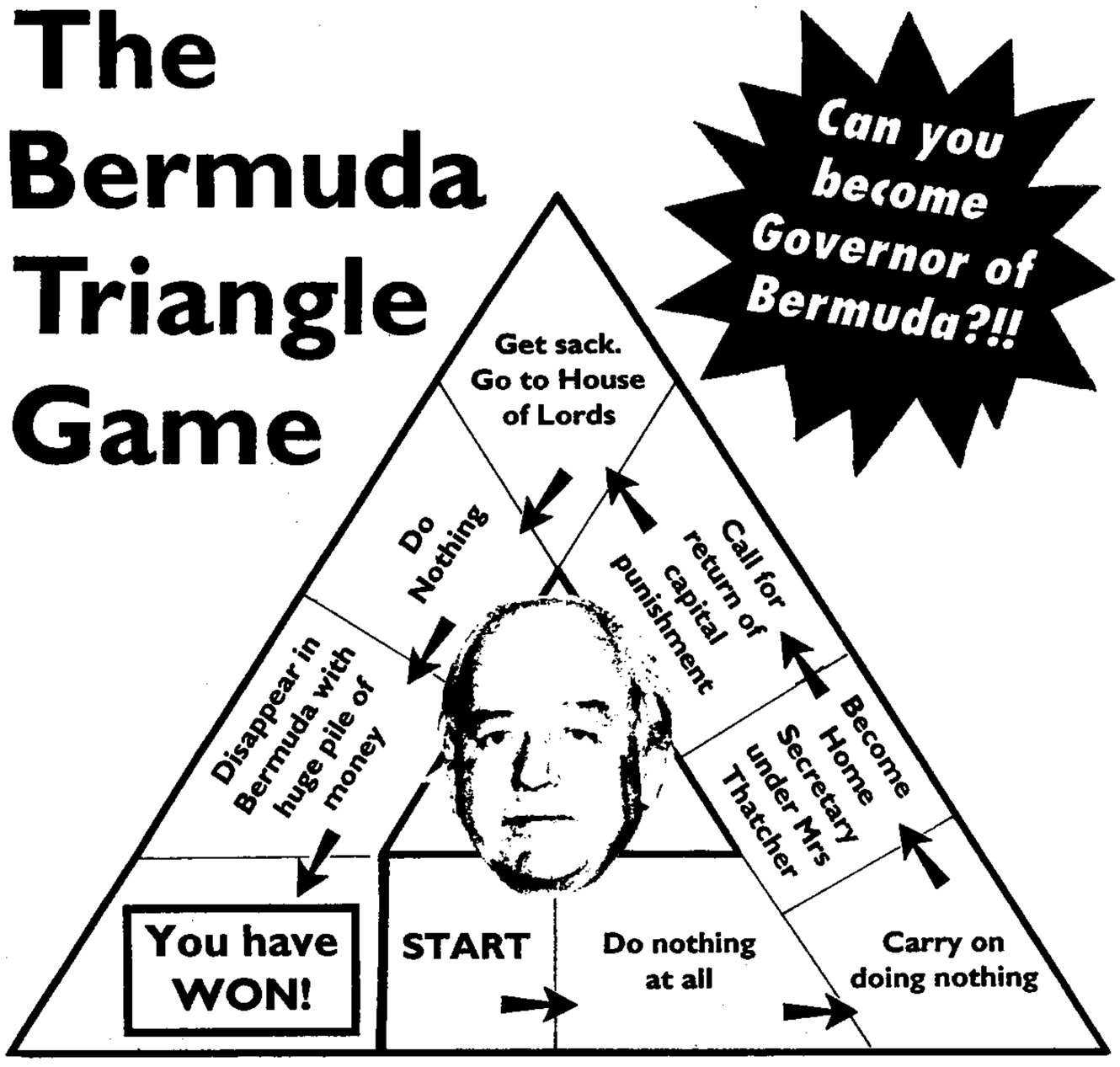
6. Mr John Smith will then be elected leader of the Labour Party.

7. Er...

8. That's it.

New game from Waddington

The Bermuda Triangle Game


Can you become Governor of Bermuda?!!
Get sack. Go to House of Lords
Do Nothing
Call for return of capital punishment
Disappear in Bermuda with huge pile of money
Become Home Secretary under Mrs Thatcher
You have WON!
START
Do nothing at all
Carry on doing nothing

"It's amazing — 92% of the people I surveyed said they thought the opinion polls got the election result exactly right"

The Daily Telegraph

PERSONAL VIEW

CHRISTOPHER BARKWORTH

The dark shadow over us all

ON APRIL 9th an extraordinary thing happened. Whilst all the experts were predicting a Labour victory, I took a stroll down our village high street, where I met Mrs Fothergill, the sub-postmistress.

"Lovely day, Mr Barkworth," she said. "Let's not spoil it by voting Labour." Everywhere the story was the same. My friend Mr Waldegrave told me that he was going to vote Conservative. As did Sir Marmalade Gussett, a recluse who lives nearby. Why was it that all these ordinary people suddenly decided to fly against all the indications of a Kinnock triumph?

I believe that at the last minute a dark cloud suddenly appeared over the nation's collective unconscious. And that dark cloud of socialism casting its baleful shadow over every aspect of British life could only be dispelled by affirming the Jungian positive and voting Conservative, thereby saving about £6,000 a year in my own case *(shurely 'saving the nation from the nightmare phase of the left-wing dream'? Ed).*

Mr John Major

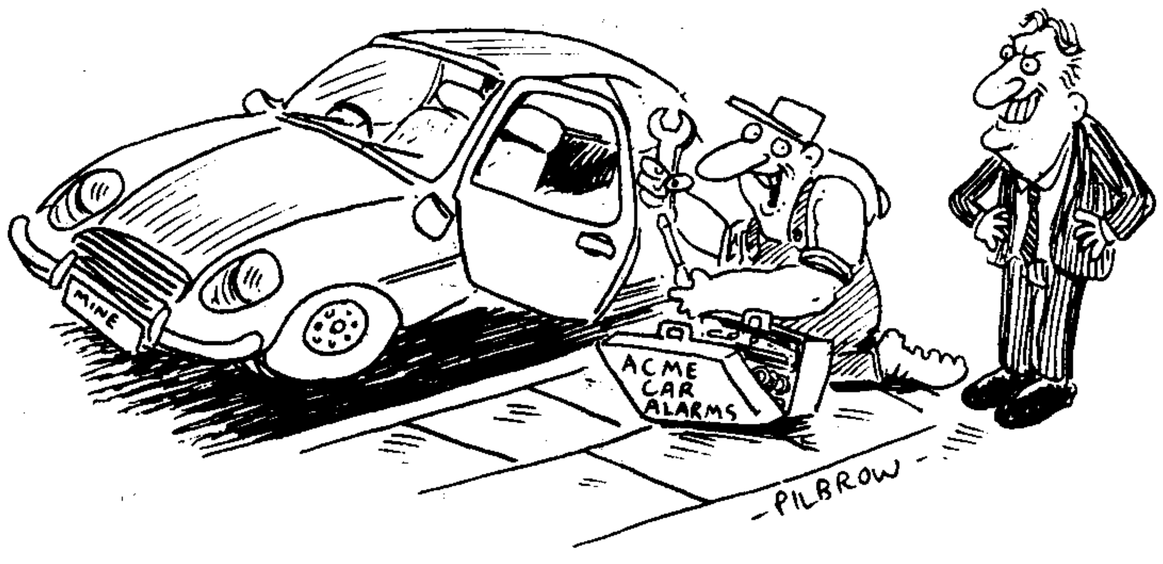
Another apology

In our last issue we apologised to Mr John Major for describing him as a brilliant Party leader and a colossus of British politics. We accepted that he was a complete nonentity who was about to lose the election and who should never have taken over from Mrs Thatcher.

We very much regret the publication of this letter, which was printed in error due to circumstances beyond our control.

We are now happy to reiterate our previous strongly held conviction that John Major is a towering figure, a world statesman, and a razor-sharp intellect with a grasp of economic detail unrivalled by anyone since Lord Liverpool.

© World Copyright TV's Charles Moore



"It's programmed to go off whenever a neighbour falls asleep"

FA Cup

Semi-Final

NEASDEN v LIVERPOOL

'So close' says sad Knee

by **E.I. Erewego**, Our Man In The St John's Ambulance With The Saline Drip And The Entire Neasden Team

THE world of soccer was rocked to its foundations last night when, with one minute to go in extra time, lowly North Circular Relegation League hopefuls Neasden FC looked like holding their own against the might of Anfield.

As the referee looked at his watch, Neasden fans (Sid & Doris Bonkers) held their breath as Liverpool looked as if they were about to crack. Baldy Pevsner found space in the centre circle and chipped a good-looking ball over the head of the advancing Liverpool hardman Ronnie Kray. But then, as Pevsner attempted to follow the ball, there was a loud crack and he was left on the ground, having sustained multiple fractures to all his limbs.

Unfair Kop

All over the field it was the same story. Between the posts, veteran one-legged netminder Wally Foot lay motionless; Bert O'Relli, long-serving wizard of the wing, doubled up in agony as a red shirt punched him expertly in the stomach; Archie Belgrano, former Argentinian international striker, was treated to a knuckle sandwich in another successful Liverpool attempt to "play the man". As referee Sid Himmler, sporting his regulation dark glasses and a white stick, blew his whistle for full time, not a single Neasden player was capable of standing up.

Triple Vodka By-Pass

And tragedy inevitably followed. Ron Knee, Neasden's tight-lipped manager, watched the ensuing penalty shoot-out with an ashen face.

Liverpool had no difficulty in netting all five of their penalties against Neasden's now-comatose custodian of the posts.

In reply, Neasden's spot-kickers were unable to manage a single goal, mainly due to the fact that they were all in an ambulance on the way to the Royal Neasden Infirmary.

Professional Foul Mouth

As the victorious Liverpool squad left the field, their jubilant manager Graham Terminator was full of praise for the St John's Ambulance Brigade.

"I admit that we play a tough game, but it is unfair to criticise us when no one has actually died," he said.

But a disappointed Ron Knee told a different story.

"We played fair. Neasden can hold their heads up high. Or, rather, they can't — because most of them are in traction."

LATE SCORE

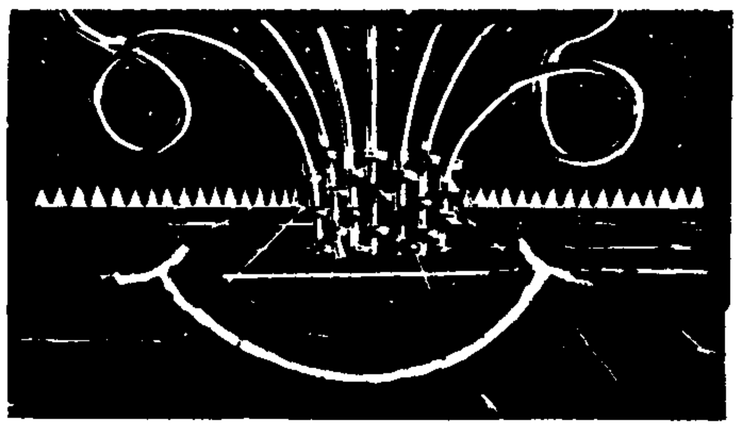
Revlon Women's Soccer Charity Shield. Semi-Final, 1st Leg

Neasden WFC 0

Leighton Buzzard Lionesses 11

(Mary Quant 3, Marie Claire 3, Estelle Lauder 2, Lucy Clayton 2, Tracy Bonkers [o.g.])

DIARY



W.F. DEEDES

Something which may or may not be of interest. I wonder if I am alone in noticing how few young people these days wear bowler hats to their office or place of work?

In the old days, the bowler hat was an essential part of every ambitious young man's apparel. Terrifically smart it was too, especially when worn on the upper part of the body.

Those days are now long gone, more's the pity. Strolling along Oxford Street the other day with a leading figure from the Treasury, I counted barely a bowler on any of those who work in the shopping emporia that have recently cropped up along that lengthy thoroughfare.

What a shame. A hat remains an excellent item for those of us who wish to wear something on our heads from time to time. Without a hat, a fellow must walk around bare-headed. *Plus ça change*, as our French cousins would have it.

I read last week of a chap who slipped and plunged over a thousand feet down a mountain to his death. A horrifying experience indeed. Speaking personally, I wouldn't have relished it a jot. Looking back over a long and thankfully varied career, I find I have no recollection whatsoever of plunging down a mountain to certain death, though obviously one's cracked one's head toppling off the odd cliff from time to time. But credit where credit's due and hats off to the fellow. As the old expression has it, you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs.

We British have always admired the plucky little New Zealander with his half-pound of butter in one hand and his tender roast lamb in the other.

I was reminded of this when reading of the young lady who claims to have had a wee one by Captain Mark Phillips.

I would not wish to comment on the case in hand. But I wonder how many people realise that New Zealand is a country made up of two islands, both surrounded by sea. This is easiest to grasp by looking at an atlas in the comfort of one's own drawing-room. When one is actually there, it is harder to take in, unless, of course, one is very tall indeed.

Might the influence of the sea upon this proud island folk have some sort of bearing upon the case? I suspect not. But if I were a betting man, which I am, I would not like to place my last penny-farthing on it. Whatever happened to the penny-farthing, incidentally?

Highly placed friends in the government tell me the Conservatives have won the 1992 election. It rather reminds me of 1966, when the Labour Party was victorious. Otherwise the two events have little in common, though neither Harold Wilson in 1966 nor John Major in 1992 wore a bowler hat, or at any rate not in public. *Plus ça change*.

King Edward VII is not very much in the news these days. Being tolerably familiar with the ways of Fleet Street, I would hazard a guess that this is because the poor chap is no longer alive. Over the years, I have grown alert to the fact that Fleet Street much prefers to write about living persons, I know not why.

I met that estimable fellow only once, as a cub reporter in the provinces. Luckily enough, he took to me like a shot, perhaps because I had been an old friend of his mother, and we spent a good half-hour chatting away on an equal footing. Our speech was private, so I will not recount it here. But I think that I am giving nothing away when I say that with the canny eye of youth I noticed the King sporting a beard, and also that he was a trifle portly.

I wonder if I am alone in thinking that a vivid personal anecdote such as this is immensely more illuminating than any number of turgid volumes turned out by the professional historians from their lofty towers of academe, however "worthy" they may be?

Not every fad catches on, thank goodness. "Jeans", for instance. I remember in the late '50s a very senior member of the Government taking me to one side and saying that these brittle cotton trousers were soon to be all the rage. Yet one never heard of them again. And many moons ago, we were told by the so-called "experts" that the 78 gramophone record had had its day, and that it was soon to be replaced by something newer and better. But nothing whatsoever came along to replace it, and my own collection of 78 gramophone records is still affording me much pleasure.

But last weekend I had my first taste of a new fad that seems to me to be in with a chance of catching on. I was offered a "Potato Crisp" — a wafer-thin effort, deep-fried until golden then sprinkled with a little salt and placed in a plastic bag. The manufacturers of these comestibles tell me they have hopes for their survival as a cocktail "snack". The spirit of enterprise lives on. Full marks all round.

I am an indefatigable traveller, always have been. As I pass from one country to another, I take pains to jot down differences between cultures barely perceptible to a less practised eye.

Take Kenya, for instance. Very hot, dry land, very much a short-sleeves-sort-of-place.

Not so the Antarctic. This chilly region is much colder and liable to freeze. Best wear a woollie there.

On the other hand, Canada, that voluminous country just to the North of the United States, is more varied in its climate than both. Indeed, the seasoned traveller learns pretty sharpish to pack both a woollie and short sleeves when visiting Canada.

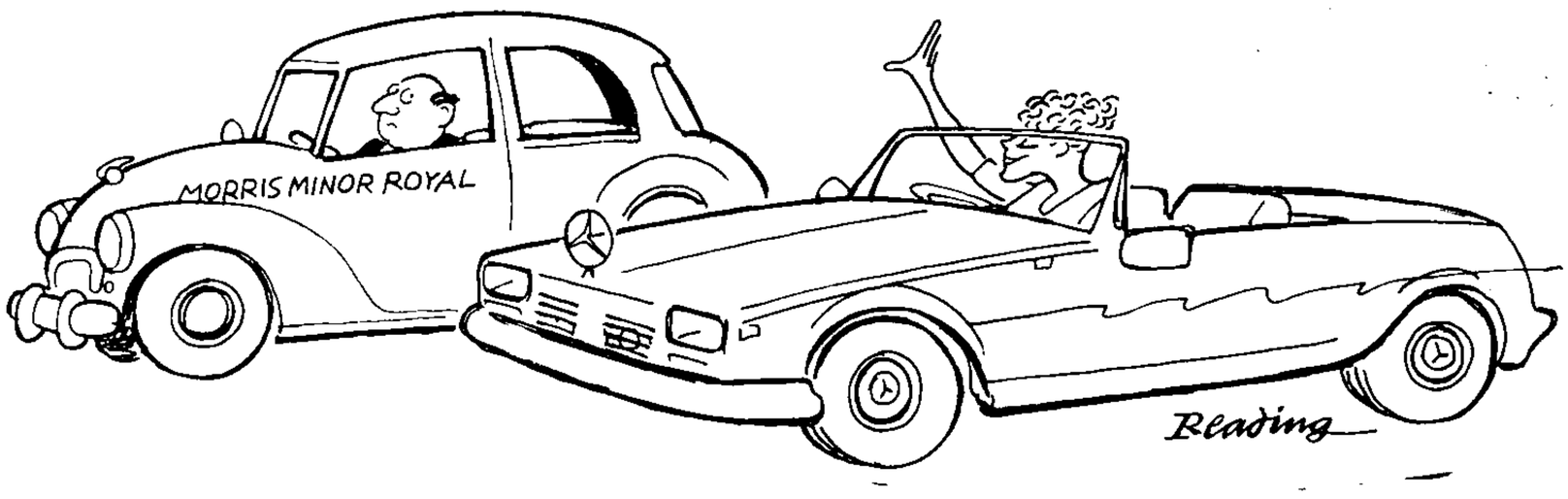
In these days of high-speed travel, motorboats, bi-planes and the like, I wonder quite how many of my fellow travellers have the time to notice such telling differences between their destinations. Yet we persist in calling it progress. *Plus ça change*.

Am I alone in noticing that there are far fewer trams around than once there were?

The thought struck me as I was waiting for a tram in the Kings Road last Saturday. I had been lunching with a very high-placed figure in the Cabinet, and I was planning to hop on a tram back to Mayfair.

My wait seemed interminable. Hackney cabs, automobiles, bicycles, even omnibuses passed — but still no tram! Luckily, I noticed a member of the working classes walking by ("classless society" my foot! One sees them everywhere). Having come to know and trust such blokes whilst giving them orders in the last war, I called him over with a ready smile and the promise of a shiny penny ha'penny.

To my astonishment, he informed me that the tram service was no more, and that I would be better off using shanks's pony. Just imagine the uproar if this information were to become more widely known! The tram has long been the backbone of our national life. 'Twould be a shame indeed were it to disappear. *Plus ça change*.



David Tredinnick with the Prime Minister at No. 10 Downing Street, at a reception to raise money for Huntingdon's disease.

Election Manifesto

Literary Review

Better dead than read

Blood On The Walls: Memoirs of an Anti-Royalist
Willie Hamilton
(Bloomsbury, £17.99)

AMID the recriminations and post-mortems which are accompanying Labour's fourth election defeat, the value of this little book in helping to determine How It All Went Wrong has been mysteriously overlooked.

Blood On The Walls, the memoirs of a Durham miner's son who went on to achieve lasting notoriety for being rude about the royal family, is a revealing examination of the mentality of the old-style Labour Party, the party of smoke-filled rooms and trade union muscle. It is also — the two are connected — one of the most wretched political autobiographies ever put between hard covers.

Why is Willie Hamilton's account of his life and opinions so very dreadful? Is it because of the arch refusal to go into details whenever things turn mildly interesting (no serious names are named politically and "there were exciting moments" is all Hamilton will say about the proximity of a female establishment to his teacher training college)? Is it because of the hempen homespun angle which tends to convert ordinary people into, you guessed it, "folk"? Is it because of the banal conclusions about the parliamentary life ("the price of being an MP is paid by his wife and children") which we have read in every other political memoir since the dawn of time, or the lumpen Scotch saws ("the best laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley")?

No, the wretchedness is almost solely attributable to 1) self-righteousness; and 2) conceit.

There never was a politician unconvinced of his own rectitude or his fitness for the position to which God — and Hamilton, a staunch Roman Catholic, is fond of invoking the deity — called him, but this conceit is of a very special sort. He quotes the statistics of his election victories. He quotes approving press comment. He mentions, *en passant*, the terrific sales of his previous book *The Queen And I*. All this one can forgive. It is a little less easy to forgive the overweening confidence in his personal judgment. For Hamilton, it appears, was always right — right about the time-servers on the Labour front bench, right about the Tory bastards (his hatred of Conservative politicians is almost pathological) and, superabundantly, right about the parasites in Buck House.

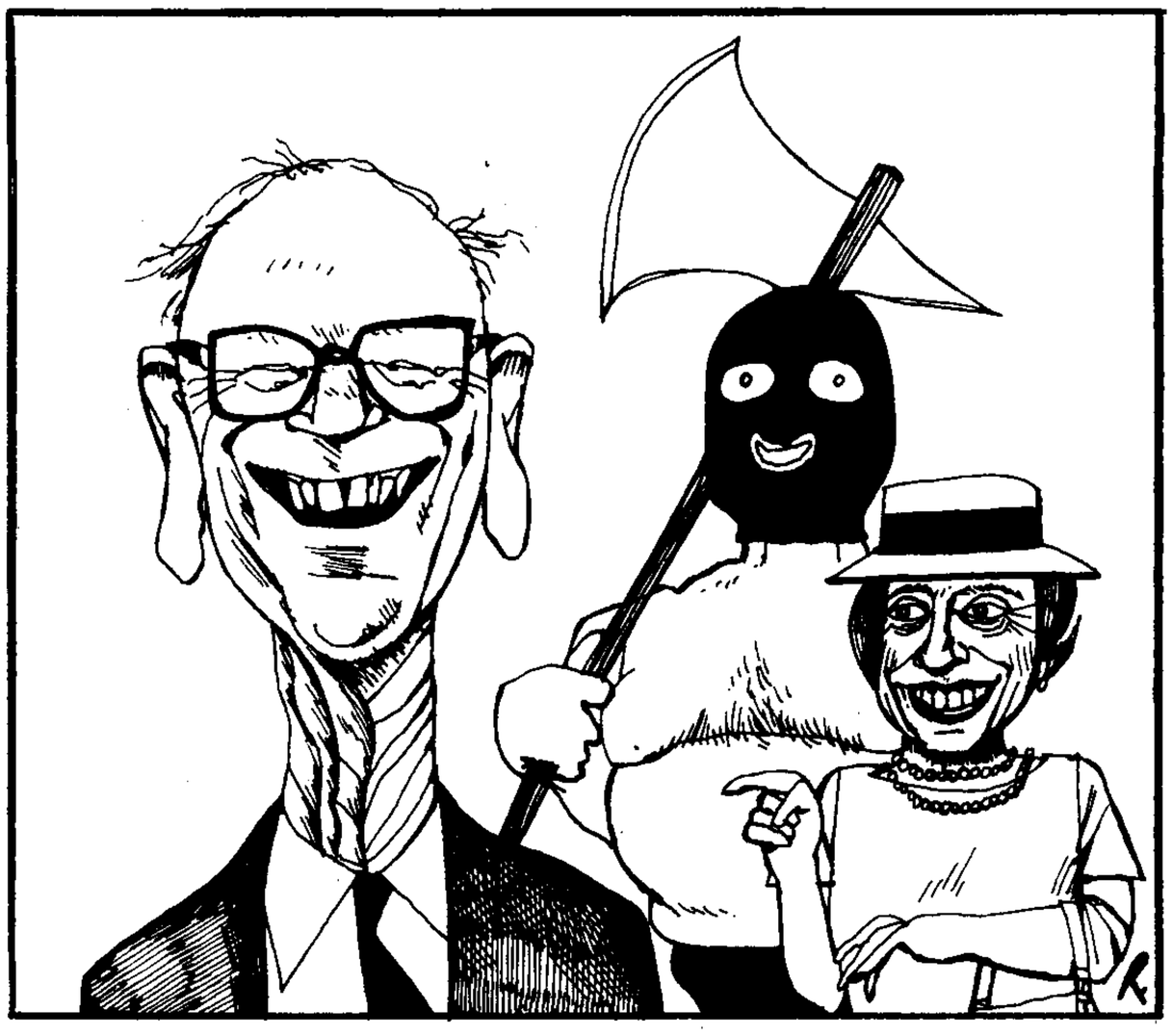
Such is Hamilton's unswerving adherence to his own line that the inconsistencies of his position simply fail to strike him. He inveighs against toff landlords and their noble lordships only to salute one couple who had him to stay for "treating their lodgers like gentlemen". Bakeries full of cake are had and eaten simultaneously. Thus in the '60s rising parliamentary salaries allow the MP and his family to move to a "much better house in leafy Beckenham". Unfortunately "it was a Tory area and my children had to go to *their* schools". Willie has a tremendous time harrying the local education authority without ever pausing to wonder whether Beckenham might not have been the best area to move to in the first place.

The same bloody-mindedness invests his political career. After much manoeuvring he gets Harold Wilson to give him the chairmanship of the Public Estimates Committee, a post he seems to have coveted. Hamilton's final judgment? "A monumental waste of time".

What makes *Blood On The Walls* even sadder is the depth of genuine feeling which underlies it. Born into a penurious childhood in a Durham miner's row, beset by family tragedy, hamstrung by his convictions — signing up as a conscientious objector in 1939 must have taken courage — Hamilton was clearly angered by the suffering and inequality he saw around him and determined to do something about it.

What, you might ask, was the result? At one point he has the cheek to mark Harold Wilson down as a creature of the establishment, but who, for all his stereotyped resentment of the royals, was more of the Labour establishment, who pro-ceeded more dutifully through the lobbies at the whips' behest, than Willie Hamilton?

For all the good intentions, the engrained surliness — what he calls, hilariously, his "anarchical views" — end up only a whisker away from personal score settling. This was old-style "socialism". Incredibly, there are still people who mourn its passing.



Books & Bookmen

☐ ARGUABLY the British publisher with most reason to feel hard done by amid the American takeovers of recent years is Victor Gollancz.

Boston publisher Houghton Mifflin bought it a few years ago to have access to Gollancz's efficient warehouse in Littlehampton and to its sales force. Yet it never provided the one-time left-wing house with cash to buy newsworthy books and thus become a player in a bigger league.

Now Houghton Mifflin, miffed that its fellow Bostonian publisher Little, Brown has entered the UK market in a big way by acquiring Cap'n Bob's Macdonald for less than £10 million (plus or minus the debts), realises that it has missed its opportunity to buy big books as a result of not funding Gollancz, which in any case it had no intention of doing.

A further frustration is that the most successful publisher using Gollancz's warehouse and selling facilities, Dorling Kindersley, has left and now employs its own salespeople. Houghton Mifflin is discreetly seeking a British buyer for Gollancz, but thrillers and science fiction are not the sure fire sellers they once were.

■ TO THE international children's book fair in Bologna, an oasis of calm after Frankfurt and London, where even Tom Maschler, the new doyen of children's pubiishing, doesn't gesticulate as madly as usual.

Two British publishers' stands in hall 28 are much remarked upon. First is the dazzlingly successful Dorling Kindersley exhibit, a kind of Freudian fortress with a neck of the womb-like entrance, through which one would not be admitted unless one had a very good reason to be there. Either DK is disappearing up its own navel or it has become paranoid that other publishers are stealing its ideas.

The other curious stand belongs to HarperCollins, set out with tables and chairs like an Italian cafe but without cappuccino or anything else of interest on offer. Those talented people until recently employed by Eddie Arturo McBastard Bell are now to be found on various other stands.

☐ *WHY HAVEN'T Ron Pollard of Ladbroke and the other bookies issued odds for the NCR Book Award this year, after the announcement of the shortlist by Terence Stamp and fellow judges?*

It is to be hoped that John Richardson's A Life of Picasso doesn't win, because it has already won the Whitbread and that would be uninvigorating. It would be a bit confusing if volume three of Michael Holroyd's biography of George Boring Shaw were to win; and Felipe Fernandez-Armesto's Columbus, even though we are celebrating 500 years of Columberama, doesn't sound British enough for what hitherto has been a frightfully British prize.

Jung Chang's Wild Swans must be the favourite, even if her father didn't go to Eton.

'Bookworm'

RAILWAYS

BREL's cash on non-delivery

BEFORE the election the Government tried *frantically to paper* over the cracks *in its* disastrous privatisation of British Rail Engineering Ltd (see *Eyes passim*).

Roger Ford, expert technical editor of *Modern Railways* magazine, has revealed that BR and London Underground each paid BREL about £20 million for new trains that BREL *has not even built yet*. (Some have been delayed by BREL's sloppiness, others because the Government has dragged its feet over authorisation.)

Missing out on the vital £200 million contract to build Channel tunnel overnight trains in February, BREL was facing collapse before the election. The Government therefore decided to cheat and organised the cash advance to prop up BREL for the immediate future.

Any other company would be paying BR and LU millions of pounds in compensation for late delivery of trains. But BREL of course has its own set of rules as a flagship of the Tories' privatisation cure-all — and the bail-out comes on top of the — at least — £100 million it is likely to receive from BR for cocking up the new class 158 trains!

"Such a blatant intervention makes a mockery of the level playing field on which procurement is supposed to take place," says Mr Ford in this month's issue. "But... BREL can claim to be a special case, having been created by political diktat rather than market forces."

Now the election is over BREL could well collapse, leaving desperately-underfunded BR and LU some £40m the worse off.

BR puts a spoke in the wheel

WHILE the *Eye* has chronicled how government policies on buses and rail freight have benefited the car and lorry lobbies, penny-pinching pressure on BR is now making cycle-train-cycle journeys — the "greenest" way to travel — as inconvenient as possible.

On regional railways, the open areas for luggage and cycles on old trains are now occupied by seats on the newer — but fewer — trains that have replaced them. Seats, of course, give a better financial return than luggage. Now the luggage simply blocks the aisles and bikes are restricted — often to one per train.

On InterCity there is plenty of room for bikes, but InterCity's struggle to show a profit by whatever means has resulted in reservation charges doubling from £3 per return journey to £3 per single journey. Nor is taking a bike on the train simply a matter of reserving a place in advance; and it is here that BR shows, government pressure aside, that it is not really interested in carrying bikes.

A free leaflet called *The Rail Travellers' Guide to Biking by Train* contains all the complex information about which trains carry bikes free of charge, which ones require reservations, which ones carry bikes only against the peak flow, and so on. The way the information is set out could hardly be less friendly and the booklet reeks of an attempt to dissuade rather than encourage cyclists from taking their bikes on trains.

BR bends over backwards to accommodate wheelchair-bound travellers, but space for wheelchairs in the new trains serving many of Britain's scenic areas cannot be used for cycles. Instead BR allows just one bike on each of the infrequent new trains serving the cyclists' paradise of Central Wales, while trains serving the spectacular North Yorks moors refuse to carry any bikes at all.

Cash-starved BR's attitude to cyclists — at a time when more bikes are being sold in Britain than cars — is sad indeed. For how are cyclists to get themselves and their machines to the North Yorks moors? By car, of course!

CHANNEL TUNNEL

Shake, rattle and bankroll...

THE earthquake that shook the German-Dutch frontier last week measured 6.3 on the Richter scale. If it had been located under the English Channel it would probably have destroyed the Channel tunnel.

Despite this worrying news, after two years of talks the Anglo-French Safety Authority and Eurotunnel have still not reached agreement on safety measures to cope with seismic risk and the measures necessary to evacuate 10,000 passengers.

Last December, the then transport minister Roger Freeman told the mid-Kent MP Andrew Rowe that the deadline for agreement was last February. Like so much else about Eurotunnel, it proved somewhat over-optimistic.

The seismic risk is not negligible. According to the *Journal of Kent Local History*, the area has suffered a major earthquake on average every 29 years since 1076 — many with epicentres along the route of the tunnel — and some have sunk ships in the Straits of Dover. John Corbett, who master-minds the Hollingbourne Action Group in Kent, has calculated that there will be four or five quakes during the 120-year lifetime of the tunnel, with the next one due by 2005.

Meanwhile the affairs of Eurotunnel and the vast amounts of money involved have now entered City folklore, and there is scarcely any surprise as items of bad news rain down like confetti. The latest turn in the great Euro-farce was an order from an arbitration tribunal that Eurotunnel pay its contractors an extra £52 million a month, in addition to the £26 million it is now paying, just to keep the work ticking over. This is a standby payment until an £800 million dispute between the two sides is settled.

The implication is that in the tribunal's view the contractors have the best of the argument, so the final settlement on the £800 million would favour them. Eurotunnel, which is appealing, is becoming inured to horrendous happenings. One possibility is that it will renew the idea of paying the contractors in Eurotunnel shares — the City equivalent of what Mark Twain called "earning a precarious living by taking in another's washing".

When the idea was first discussed, it was laughed into oblivion. A City expert called it "a fairly desperate move, a banana-republic sort of arrangement". But now it might be taken more seriously, if only because the wretched contractors may have no alternative.

The latest ruling follows a court defeat for Eurotunnel when it asked for an order preventing the contractors from stopping work. The contractors were threatening to do so because of their dissatisfaction over who paid what. Eurotunnel blithely hoped the courts would instinctively ban a threatened strike, even if the threat came from 10 of the biggest engineering companies in Europe. To Eurotunnel's amazement, the court turned on them and effectively decided the contractors *could* legally down tools.

Eurotunnel was also astonished when the European Commission decided not to end the duty-free concession for cross-Channel ferries. This will encourage people to go by ship rather than by tunnel where the passengers will be required to sit trapped in their cars and coaches and cannot wander around duty-free shops stocking up on cheap booze and fags. Eurotunnel is seeking £100 million compensation from governments — there's no harm in asking but the money is likely to be elusive.

Sir Alistair Morton, the Eurotunnel boss, has succeeded with his strategy of getting something moving under the seabed, in the belief that the more expensive it became to pull out, the more certain it was that everyone caught in financing the building of the tunnel would have to soldier on.

Eventually there will have to be a reckoning as backers try to get their money's worth. But that is another story. As we the *Eye* has always warned, the tunnel is likely to be one of those misbegotten enterprises which will never be paid for and will face an ever-growing debt as the interest mounts up faster than the takings. It is largely unwanted and useless but has made a valuable contribution to life for everyone who enjoys a good farce.

TRAMS

Retrolink...

NEWS that Queen Brenda will open Manchester's ludicrous new transport system Metrolink (*Eyes passim*) in July has caused a flurry of bets at the bookies.

It's now odds-on that within weeks Metrolink's operators will announce that the already delayed city centre and south Manchester sections are still not ready.

Metrolink, which has replaced old Manchester rail routes with trams which one day will run on city centre streets, has only just stumbled into action — four years late. This is largely thanks to the area's dithering Labour politicians who snubbed the building of a much-needed Manchester underground system amid much empty rhetoric about Metrolink's advantages. They now find to their horror that Metrolink costs more than an underground would have cost.

Rather than complementing the city's rail network, Metrolink will be its nemesis. Not only is the system limited to non-inter-city lines (whereas an underground would have integrated the whole network), but Metrolink's operators have, incomprehensibly, outlined that the next tram route will also replace an existing rail line rather than revamp one of the many Manchester lines axed by Beeching.

Meanwhile both the Labour-controlled Manchester transport executive, which is responsible for local rail, and BR's Regional Railways offshoot, which acts as sub-contractor, stumble from crisis to crisis:

- The much-vaunted £28 million rail link with Manchester airport, Europe's fastest-growing, is also going to be half-cocked. Passengers at Stockport, Greater Manchester's third-rank station, can catch trains direct to Stanstead in Essex — but there are no plans to link them with their own airport, four miles away!
- In a spiteful bid to subvert government plans to put freight back on rail, councillors have allowed BR to demolish south Manchester's Fallowfield loop freight line and fill it in with motorway building rubble. BR also wants to close two miles of track in east Manchester which runs alongside the site of the proposed Olympics stadium.
- Transport committee councillors have refused to accept British Rail's passengers' charter without offering any alternative other than the, er, imminent election of a Labour government.
- Unannounced, BR has dropped all reference to its much-derided £30 million Network North West scheme, launched amid chaos two years ago. Network North West was meant to tidy up various unconnected bits of the region's network by re-routing all major services through Manchester Piccadilly station. Commuters now wait on jammed platforms in disbelief as pointless, half-empty cross-country "Sprinters" linking Warrington with the Isle of Ely oust vital rush-hour services.

NUCLEAR LEAKS

An accident waiting to happen... again and again

RUSSIA'S latest nuclear accident alarmingly suggests that efforts to render the country's reactors safer after Chernobyl may in fact have *increased* the likelihood of such failures.

According to the Russians, the radioactive release from the Sosnovy Bor plant, 400 miles north of Leningrad, occurred after a zirconium brace, which holds the uranium fuel pins in position inside the reactor, collapsed. The fuel consequently overheated and melted, leading to the release of the iodine gas that was detected by monitoring planes from Finland.

So what precipitated the failure of the brace? The uncomfortable probability is that it was the more highly enriched uranium fuel that was introduced into Russia's RBMK reactors after Chernobyl to prevent them becoming unstable at low power — the root cause of the 1986 catastrophe.

In the frantic search for modifications to make the RBMKs safer, this solution — along with others — was hastily devised, sanctioned (by the western-led International Atomic Energy Agency, as well as the Soviet authorities) and implemented. No testing was done first.

John Large, a nuclear consultant who has just returned from Sosnovy Bor, said the greater neutron flux from the more highly enriched fuel could have altered the metallurgy of the zirconium brace, causing it to fall apart.

This means that Russian claims that the incident was a "design base" accident, with a chance of happening once in a million years, can be disregarded. Rather, it was an accident that would not have been considered credible at the design stage and it could now be 1,000 times more likely to recur.

As the Sosnovy Bor plant was one of the first to be loaded with the more enriched fuel, which was nearing the end of its burn-up cycle when the accident happened, operators at the other modified RBMK plants have good reason to feel very apprehensive.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Government gets the wind up

THE Government is discreetly trying to decide how to bury the committee it set up to take a fresh look at clean, renewable energy. Its members included the great and the good — too many of whom display an unhealthy respect for alternative energy sources.

The committee was chaired by former energy under secretary Colin Moynihan (RIP), who "went native" in his enthusiasm. Now the election has confirmed Moynihan as a non-person, the Government wants to put a stop to such starry-eyed schemes.

The department of trade and industry, which has swallowed the energy department whole, has tried to suggest that the committee has done its job. Inconveniently, members disagree. One of them, Dr David Lindley of the Wind Energy Group, said colleagues considered they had *not* finished their work. "A draft had been produced by the civil service and the intention was that there were to be at least two meetings to consider the report. Both were cancelled when the election was announced. But now we need to meet to finalise the conclusions and recommendations," he has said.

Committee members include Dr Mary Archer, who despite being married to Jeffrey is widely respected as an expert on solar energy; Gerald Leach, who is working on the United Nations' energy strategy; Sir Hermann Bondi, a fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge, TV educator on relativity and a former chief scientist to the Government; Professor Peter Oppenheimer, Oxford economist; as well as boffins from the Science and Engineering Research Council and the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Together they constitute a high-powered voice of enlightened opinion. The Government will bring great odium upon itself if it tries to brush aside their recommendations. Those recommendations will mean spending money, a subject on which the Government is touchy; and that is why there are those who would prefer the committee's incomplete and unpublished report to be recycled in the nearest shredding machine.

AIRPORTS

Safety last

AFTER Lockerbie, just how tight is airport security? Not very, judging by a slapdash recent Dan Air incident in Munich.

A female passenger on Dan Air flight 3449 to Gatwick, having registered her luggage and obtained a boarding card, found that the flight was delayed. Later, on reading that the flight was now boarding, she contrived to miss her departure by going to the wrong terminal.

Dan Air made no announcement over the public address system in search of its errant passenger, even though it had already stowed her baggage in the hold and was clearly one passenger short. This means that either the airline's check-in computer was not working; or that its staff were dozy — or that a decision was taken not to delay the flight any further.

Even when the passenger told the airport authorities that she was not on board, an alarming lack of interest was shown. She was calmly informed that she could reclaim her luggage in Gatwick when she eventually arrived there.

Thankfully, this particular passenger had not packed a cassette recorder full of Semtex into the bottom of her suitcase.

INTELLIGENCE

Mr X marks the spat

IS IT libellous to say someone works for British intelligence? This ticklish aspect of the defamation laws has not yet been tested, though there are senior executives at the *Observer* who have clearly made up their minds on the matter.

A long article in the *Observer* last month asked whether a former Czech dissident, Jan Kavan, was an agent for the hated Czech secret police, StB, under the former Communist regime. There was a lot of evidence to suggest he was, but some who knew him disagreed (see heated arguments *Eye* v. Thames's *TV Eye*, *passim ad nauseam*). The distinguished journalist William Shawcross was quoted as saying: "After 20 years of writing about Czechoslovakia, I find it impossible to believe that he was a secret police agent."

Later on in the article came a mysterious paragraph. "Among his contacts Kavan knew a British citizen — Mr X — who the StB had identified to their own satisfaction as a 'British intelligence officer'. Mr X asked Kavan to do something for him, but the StB suspected this was part of a process designed to 'turn Kavan'. The file begins to note that 'Kavan might be playing a double game'."

This Mr X was none other than William Shawcross. He came across in the article as a British patriot who was seeking to dissuade Kavan from his service to a ruthless secret police force in eastern Europe. Yet he went to the most extravagant lengths to keep his name out of the paragraph. When the *Observer* approached him, he visited the offices, threatened libel proceedings and would not rest until his name had been replaced with the anonymous "Mr X".

The *Observer* complied, but the paper's executives are still surprised at the vehemence with which Shawcross insisted his name be withheld. *Observer* liberals are of course keen supporters of Article 19, an anti-censorship organisation founded in 1988 and which was introduced with a moving preface by... William Shawcross. "Freedom of speech is indivisible," he wrote. "We are here to defend it, wherever and whenever — and we are here to oppose those who seek to infringe upon this right. For once that freedom is lost, all other freedoms are lost with it."

Inside is a section on "laws restraining expression", the first of which is libel. It says: "The fear of libel actions against even innocently produced material is a felt restraint on proper reporting of events (leading to the famous euphemism: 'Mr X is helping police with their inquiries')."

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Tony O'Blarney

OVER THE last year or so readers of the *Sunday Times* business section have grown accustomed to regular plugs for smug Irish tycoon Tony O'Reilly, the prospective bidder for the Mirror papers.

Ludicrously generous puffs have appeared for O'Reilly's ventures, including his bid for the Australian Fairfax newspapers (he lost out to Conrad Black), his launch in London of an electronic spot-the-ball game called Golden Grid (it lost millions before being abruptly closed) and O'Reilly's investment in the Waterford Wedgwood group (a £70 million-plus investment has been submerged by huge losses).

Probably the most absurd example of O'Reilly's popularity in Wapping came when space was devoted to hailing the launch of a routine classified directory (not dissimilar to those published by Thomsons) by his Dublin-based Independent Newspapers.

Although these insights will have left most *Times* readers cold, they will happily provide the paper's deputy editor and business guru Ivan Fallon with a useful headstart: O'Reilly has chosen Fallon as his official biographer (or *Joe-Haineser*, to use the correct medical term).

Fallon will certainly have lots to write about: an unauthorised biography just published in Ireland was virtually fact free due to the usual libel considerations. Fallon will clearly not be deterred by such trifles and will be able to comment objectively on O'Reilly's performance as chief executive of the sluggish American food company Heinz (for a hilarious salary and expenses cheque totalling nearly $75 million last year). Then there's the unfortunate history of Atlantic Resources and Conroy Petroleum, two companies where O'Reilly's high profile presence has failed to prevent small shareholders taking an early bath. And of course, the tycoon's amazing investment vehicle Fitzwilton plc, which, for no clear reason, began buying car showrooms and cash and carry warehouses in the north of England just before the present recession struck.

Most interesting of all is O'Reilly's performance in the newspaper industry. His tabloid *Sunday World* has seen savage circulation falls while colour has yet to grace the pages of the main Independent titles, although photographs of Dr A.J.F. O'Reilly (as hacks must call their proprietor) proliferate.

O'Reilly's record as a newspaperman got the thumbs up in a recent *Guardian* profile by Maeve Kennedy (the same M. Kennedy who writes for one of O'Reilly's Sunday papers, in fact); but last Friday the Irish version of the monopolies commission blocked his attempt to take control of the troubled Dublin *Sunday Tribune*.

Similar problems over a company called Independent Express plc could yet stymie a bid for the *Mirror*. A joint venture by O'Reilly and Lord Stevens, Independent Express publishes an Irish edition of the *Daily Star* and prints local editions of the *Daily Express*. Stevens is likely to consult m'learned friends should this deal, which probably keeps the *Daily Star* from going under completely, be abruptly terminated in favour of the more lucrative pickings at Holborn Circus. On the other hand, it's difficult to see O'Reilly being allowed to buy the *Mirror* while involved in producing one of its rivals.

In the City

SORELY-tried shareholders in Brent Walker will not be amused by rumours that the board may have voted certain members and key executives substantial pre-election bonuses of up to £250,000 and £150,000 respectively following finalisation of the marathon refinancing exercise.

No doubt such stories are the malicious invention of the few remaining George Walker allies who see no reason why his enemies should profit from their hero's demise.

Meanwhile over at the Serious Fraud Office the police investigation into the real recipients of two *cheques totalling* £12.5 million grinds on. Negotiations are said to be continuing regarding a possible Section Two interview for "The Prisoner", whose lawyers are said to have indicated agreement in principle to a meet. Certain of Walker's closest associates, however, are reportedly less cooperative. Former finance chief Wilfred Aquilina and legal adviser John Hemingway are said, on legal advice naturally, to be somewhat less eager to discuss what they know.

The SFO has developed considerable interest, it seems, in certain Canadian entities through which moneys passed into and out of Brent Walker. Interest has also been revived in the earlier police investigation, later dropped, into the imaginative accountancy techniques of the Goldcrest Films subsidiary and its oh so profitable sale of the TV series nobody ever saw. A £7.5 million slice of the £12.5 million relates to Goldcrest.

Although progress on Elm Street has been slow, there is growing confidence that this time the SFO will have a result.

OVERLOOKED in the euphoria over the decision of Mirror Group Newspapers directors to accept responsibility for its pensioners present and future is that this decision — for which there may be no legal obligation — is not entirely selfless.

Several MGN directors as longtime *Mirror* employees could otherwise have lost their own not inconsiderable pensions — men like finance director Lawrence Guest, whose wilful blindness and silence as chairman of the pension funds' investment committee helped Maxwell and Sons to pillage with impunity.

No doubt Guest, whose survival after his pathetic performance before the Commons select committee depends increasingly on the support of chairman Ernie Burrington, and the others declared an interest when voting or not voting on the proposal which will greatly reduce the value of MGN shares to existing shareholders because of the need to provide for the up to £300 million liability.

AMBER Day's unjustly unloved chairman Philip Green apparently readily describes himself as a "good friend" of a Tony Schneider. Presumably this is not the "financier" Tony Schneider who is well known in West End casino and low life circles. For that Tony Schneider has on more than one occasion attracted the attention of Scotland Yard — he was acquitted in 1975, first on charges of possessing pornographic records and then of demanding money with menaces — and remains a subject of considerable official interest. Obviously the Tony Schneider Green knows is a totally different man and no relation. No public company chairman would possibly associate with the other Schneider.

ON THE eve of election day, when the nation was preoccupied by other matters, came the announcement that Mr Justice McKinnon would not preside over the second or third Blue Arrow trials. After his abysmal performance in Blue Arrow One this was hardly unmerited.

McKinnon wasted inordinate amounts of time on legal debates thereby helping to escalate the 183-day trial costs towards £30-35 million; he alienated the jury by directing them in no uncertain terms to acquit those defendants he had not dismissed; and when the jury ignored his view, he responded by not even fining those convicted (the four suits received suspended sentences) and effectively awarding costs against the SFO.

Exactly how it was felt McKinnon could safely be left in charge of another Blue Arrow trial was never clear. But for a while at least that was the party line, until, that is, he told the remaining defendants it was "far too soon" to set a trial date regarding events of 1987.

Explaining the decision to drop McKinnon, the Lord Chancellor's department said the judge "deserved a break". More to the point, so do the taxpayers who have to foot the bill for his last bravura performance of award winning incompetence and insensitivity, worthy of the Lord Lane Award for the year's worst judge.

AMERICAN judges take a much more serious view of fraud than their English equivalent. Sentencing Charles Keating, former chairman of American Continental, to ten years' imprisonment for selling $200 million in worthless bonds, Judge Lance Ito declared: "More money is stolen at the point of a fountain pen than at the point of a gun."

And Keating faces more where that came from when he goes to trial on charges relating to the $2 billion collapse of Lincoln Savings & Loan.

Perhaps when the great ecologist Sir James Goldsmith recovers from the hurt and humiliation of being pushed into the swimming pool at his Mexican Xanadu by assorted members of the Branson clan he will spare a thought for the somewhat less agreable surroundings in a Californian state prison of his one-time business associate. Or maybe not.

SHAREHOLDERS in Scottish Ice Rink are being invited to support a proposal to eject the present board and replace it with a new team headed by Jersey businessman Terry Brain, who wants to inject an office furniture business into the "shell" company whose shares have been suspended for four years.

Before voting for Brain shareholders would do well to quiz the erstwhile scrap metal and used car dealer about certain of his business antecedents and associates.

For example, the confusion over unpaid VAT on TV sets sold through one of his companies in South Wales which attracted the attention of the Customs.

Then there are his dealings with corrupt Jersey bank manager Derek Foster — convicted in 1989 of defrauding his employers Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank on a property deal — first at the Midland and then at HKSB.

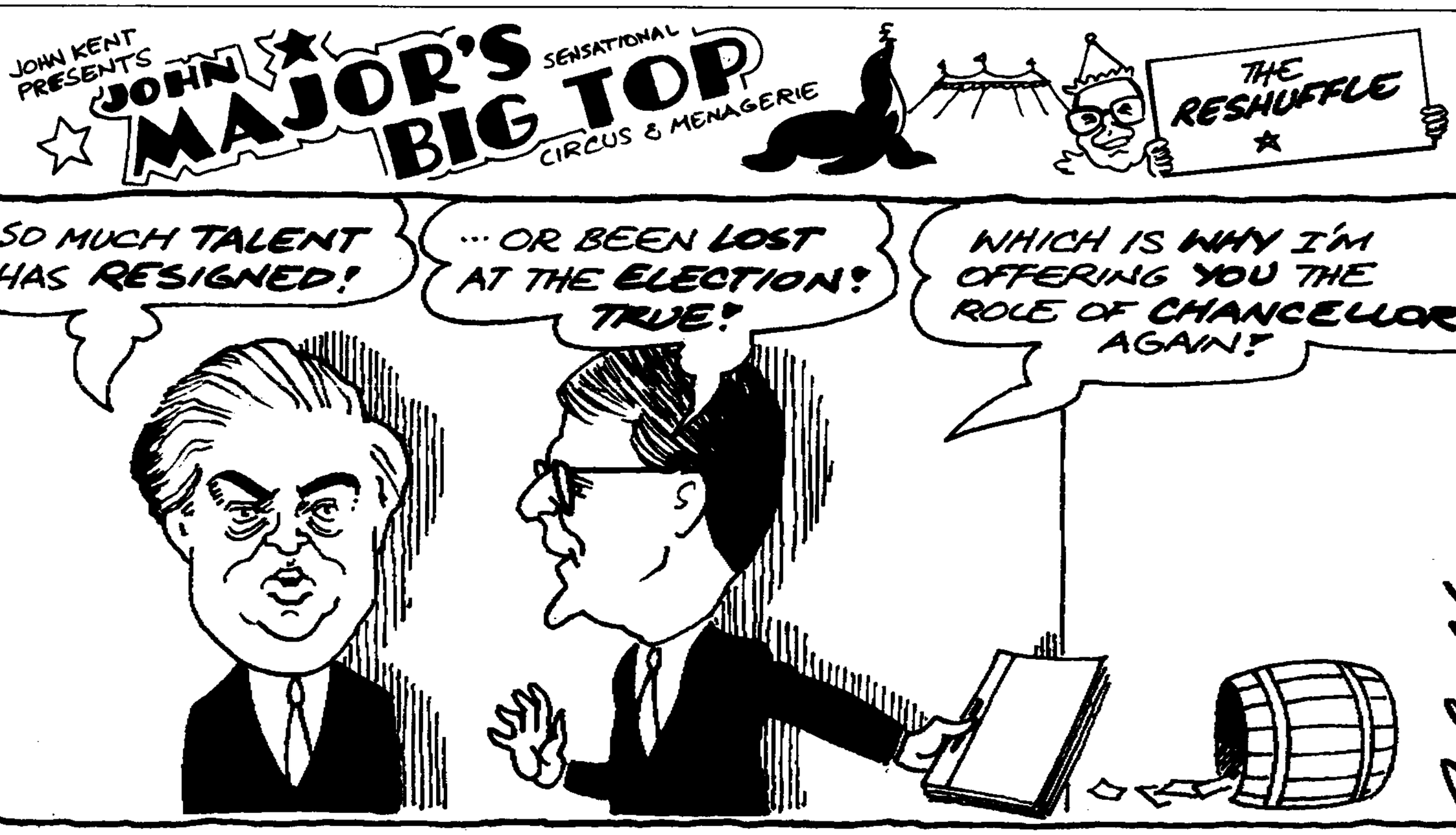
That connection resulted in Brain's arrest with Foster charged with defrauding HKSB of £5.7 million in a separate transaction. These charges stemmed from a 1982 loan approved by Foster for the purchase of a chemical concern which cost only £3.3 million. Brain, his wife and Foster shared most of the surplus £2.4 million.

When the case finally came to Southwark crown court in April 1990 the judge ordered the charges against Brain, Foster and solicitor Prof Anthony Mellows be dropped because of the delay in bringing the prosecution — a delay largely due to the initial failure of the Jersey authorities to respond to the HKSB complaint before this was passed to Scotland Yard.

"There is a case for all the defendants to answer charges but I have come to the conclusion that it would not be in the public interest to allow this case to proceed," ruled Judge Mota Singh. Which of course made everything all right, except for HKSB.

MICHAEL Ashcroft is not entirely without his admirers among City hacks, it seems. A senior Sunday commentator not unknown to spread the occasional kindly word is said to have recently enjoyed a few rounds of golf in Ashcroft's company on a sunny island course faraway. No doubt such personal pastimes do not in any way influence the newspaper's comments on ADT.

'Slicker'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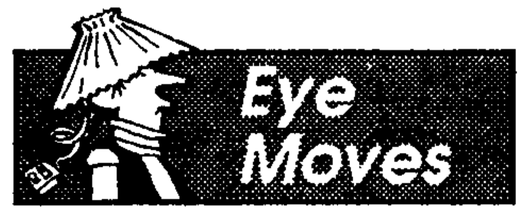

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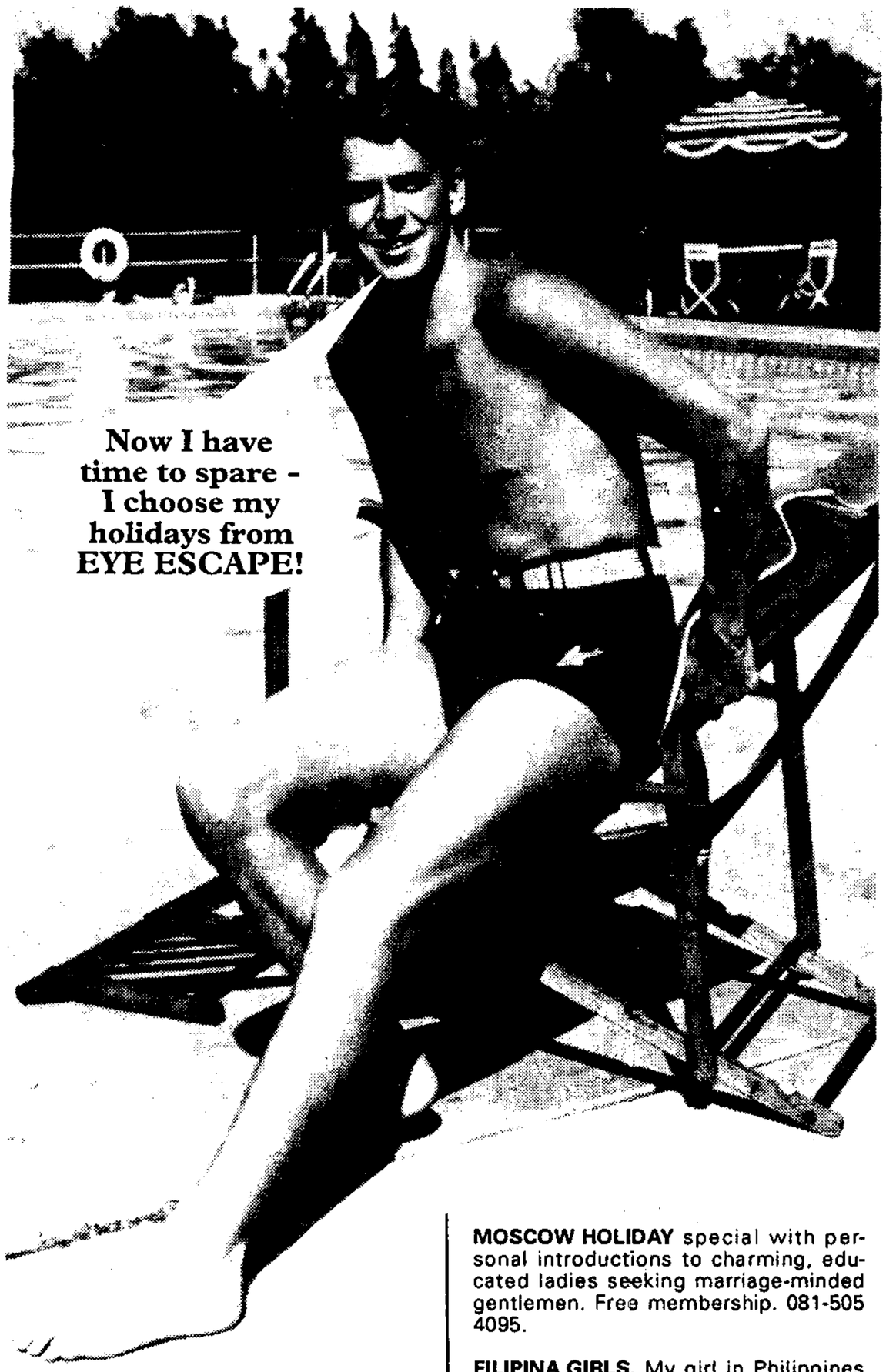

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TALL, NICE LOOKING man, 27, married, foreign, athletic build seeks lady for discreet fun. N/E London area. Box 11790.

FEMALE, (30), slim, warm, funny, gentle, seeking London professional (Lawyer, City?). Address? Box 5989.

SINGLE solvent Sussex doctor non-smoker, 36yrs, christian, generous, affectionate, kind. Likes dining, travel and the outdoors. Seeks single slim petite feminine lady (n/s), blonde, brunette, sparkling personality for mutual support, good conversation and life-long romance. Sussex/Kent area. Details photo, phone no: Box 2089.

ATTRACTIVE FEMALE 40, WI, single clever, feminine, romantic, desires a very special, very successful male for a passionate fun relationship. Phone. Discretion assured. Box 3892.

I AM AFFLUENT divorced public school/Oxford half blue. Returned UK after two decades USA. You are London/Southeast woman, well-educated/spoken/heeled/endowed (with children?). We share warmth, wit, whimsy, wisdom and whatever. Letter/photo/telephone please. Box 3992.

ME: 5'5", 37 MALE neither ugly nor fat. Now solo. You: Feminine, slim, 25-40, beautiful, intelligent. Enjoying theatre, films, opera, unpretentiousness and uninhibited cuddling. Photo and long letter receive same by return. Box 4092.

TALL PROFESSIONAL male 30, likes films, plays, politics, travelling and outdoors. Seeks N/S intelligent woman for shared pleasures. London/Home Counties. Box 4192.

LONELY MARRIED MAN 35 seeks attractive lady 18-35 for fun between the sheets and more? Oxon/Bucks/Northants. Photo please. Box 4292.

MALE LECTURER 30ish, fit, unconventional, attractive, hyperactive, theatre and new/old music preoccupied, N/S, solvent. Beds/Cambs-ish. Does a similar female exist? Photo please, if you do. Box 4392.

LONDON LAWYER (42) seeks sexy lady for steamy relationship. Phone 081 444 8950 home/071 722 1560 office.

SINGLE PROFESSIONAL male 34 educated, travelled, seeks professional female 20-32 to live with, love, maybe marry and settle in Hampshire. Details with photo and phone please. Box 4592.

6 FT-ish, ATTRACTIVE unattached woman seeks solvent, interesting, unattached man of similar age. Sense of humour mixed with kindness essential. South Cumbria. Box 4692.

SOCIALIST MALE LONDON tall, slim, 27, likes reading, red wine, films, food, kissing, seeks affectionate independent woman. Box 4792.

BLACK BEAUTY 31 slim, seeks unattached male any race. London. Photo pre-requisite. Box 4892.

IMAGINATIVE young male seeks erotic lady pen friend. Box 4992.

PROFESSIONAL MAN late 40s seeks affectionate educated lady London/S for afternoons of pleasure. Box 5092.

WELL-TRAVELLED sporty 53 years old London lady with disinterested partner, seeks educated, healthy man, to share spare time, holidays and surplus energy. Box 5192.

CERTIFIED CRAZY PERSON
(male), 36, 6ft-ish, seeks female crazy person for possible joint certification?
Box 5292.

GLAMOROUS 8-H'CAP lady doctor, 37 (London) seeks successful single man for fun/golf outings. Box 7992.

SOMERSET. WHERE are the under 45 attractive sincere intelligent educated sensuous fit confident women? Box 3592.

DERBYSHIRE RAM desires ewe. I'm 46, fit, professional seeking educated petite lady for entertainment and discreet pleasures. ALA, photograph appreciated. Box 3692.

TOUGH-SPIRITED, warm-hearted woman, 31, good brains and body, wonders whether there are any intelligent presentable men who don't secretly prefer bimbos. Box 3792.

STRICT BUT unfair professional 33 year old ugly bastard (well nearly) seeks a female (Demi Moore lookalike) to share romance, adventures, humour and kite flying in the West Country. Please reply along with phone number and photo to Box 2292.

POSITIVE CHARMING c.50 lady, witty slim, needs cultivated lively single man. Bristol/Somerset. Box 5692.

MAN, 30, graduate, attractive, blond, 5'11", company director, smoker, usual interests. Seeks tall woman with brain and sense of humour for good times and romance. Photo please. London/Surrey/Berks. Box 5792.

BACHELOR, 38, seeks adventurous woman to explore sexuality. Yours and mine. London. Box 5892.

YOUNG MAN, 35, incurable workaholic with good sense of humour, seeks attractive happy female for passionate affair. Daytime liaison or evening romance. Photo please. Box 5992.

COMFORTABLY OFF Chelsea based fellow turning 60 and semi-retired seeks warm sexy lady for swimming and long lunches. Discretion essential. Photo please. Hermes scarf for the winner as starters. Box 6092.

STALLION, 18, seeks experienced female trainer 30-50 for long gallops. Anywhere. Photo. Box 6192.

TWO MERMAIDS wanted for decorative duties on motor yacht in Greece to console and cuddle two 40ish single skippers. Box 6292.

CARING, GENTLE man, youthful 30, 5'5", Oxford doctorate, music lover, needs passionate romance with intelligent, cheerful, curvy woman who shouldn't be on her own. Box 6392.

CLASSICAL YANK VIRGO musician (39) ever-so-slightly aggrieved that the prospective Mrs. Bach has not yet responded to previous 'Eye' entreaties. He's sensitive, good-humoured, one-off, single; a handsomely statuesque teddy-bear (big man with big need!) blessed with gob-smacking eyes and other commendable features and continues to search the world for a member of the fairer sex to play fantasias and fugues with forever. Mrs Bach should be between 25-40, European (preferably Scandinavian), without issue, well read, sensual and hopefully exquisite in every way. Photo/letter/'phone and/or fax guarantees sincere reply. Take a chance. Please let hopeful Teddy hear! Box 1891.

CULTURE, CHINESE food, Coronation Street. Professional male (30), genuine and easy-going, seeks cheerful girl (n/s) with similar interests for friendship/romance. London/SE. Box 10392.

HUMOROUS, INTELLIGENT man wanted for bored female postgrad. Box 10292.

BRIGHT PRETTY slim warm brunette 23, reputation for acidity not entirely undeserved! I'm looking for a tall man 25+, intelligent and cultured who can give as good as he gets — and better? London. Photo please. Box 8592.

MOUNTAIN MAN? An attractive woman (36) seeks a n/s soul-mate (North West) for hilly activities. Box 10492.

I BLAME the media... Good-looking lady journalist, 36, seeks overdue distraction from typewriter. Arty, tallish, solvent, man with brains and (leftish) heart ideal. Any in London still unmarried. Photo please. Box 10592.

INTELLIGENT WOMAN, 24, seeks similar for uncomplicated relationship. Age not important. Box 11692.

LIVELY SENSUAL Dutch bachelor, 40s, loves theatre, chamber-music, eroticism, exotic food, seeks an interesting younger female for deep friendship and whatever follows naturally. Box 11092.

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AFFECTIONATE INTELLECTUAL male, 44; 6ft, attractive, interesting and a terrific kisser, seeks warm feminine lady with a generous mouth for a stimulating relationship. Lives near London. Box 6492.

ATTRACTIVE INTELLIGENT woman, 49, seeks similar man Brighton/London area. Photo and phone number appreciated. Box 6592.

ENIGMATIC, ATTRACTIVE female, young 48, tall, sleek, adventurous, emotionally giving, independent, media career, seeks affectionate humorous, urbane male of depth, subtlety. Photo, tel. no. appreciated. West London. Box 6692.

OXON GUY seeks Essex girl, you're thirty something intelligent attractive single n/s. If we get serious, prepared to travel. I'm, er, single. West of London. Box 6792.

PROF MALE 40 central London single slim tall fit n/s likes cinema sun France seeks long-legged female 25-30 English/Continental non-Guardian reader. Box 6892.

ATTRACTIVE, INTELLIGENT, female (Berks) wants witty and happy man for dining and theatre-going. Preferably over 28 and 5'10". Photo please. ALA. Box 6992.

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SOLVENT GENTLEMAN 29 would be writer loves going racing 5'11" smoker unfit witty seeks classy lady older? Must be intellectual free thinker, long term relationship, photo? Based North West. ALA. Box 7092.

SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN, late thirties, unhappily married, seeks tall slim intelligent n/s lady 25-40 for stimulating diversions. Details including photograph and phone no. (if poss). Box 7192.

SECURELY-MARRIED MAN, 36, London-based, educated, etc., seeks female counterpart for very discreet relationship on an occasional but longterm basis. Tel no. appreciated. Box 7292.

TALL PROFESSIONAL handsome Asian male, 35, London, seeks discreet female for nonfatal attraction. Photo please. Box 7392.

S/W WOMAN, early 40s, seeks male company for wining, dining, good conversation and fun. Box 7492.

DANTE SEEKS Beatrice (married). Photo! Box 7592.

PERT BOTTOM with chiselled male body attached; brains, wit and carnal instincts too, seeks pretty female equivalent (late 20s?). Decent (or indecent) photo please, with letter. Box 7692.

30s VEGETARIAN girl biker into HM sought by meat-eating S.W. male (37). Box 8492.

MALE CULTURE VULTURE Tall, 30, seeks female (marital status and age unimportant) for mutual fulfilment. London/SE. Box 4492.

BORED HUSBAND, 48, seeks intelligent n/s lady for discreet daytime affair, London area. Box 8692.

PROFESSIONAL MALE young 40 seeks attractive female for discreet affair/relationship. Tyne and Wear. Box 8792.

TRULY HONEST, sincere warm gentleman 35, humorous intelligent creative easy-going and presentable! You: bright laughing attractive refined? Younger. View to sharing conversation, companionship, interests, life!? Exchange long letter + photo? Midlands/anywhere. Box 8892.

UNEMPLOYED MALE, 19, seeks on the job training with older woman. Scotland. Box 8992.

INDEPENDENT MAN, 31, lefty greenish intelligent gentle seeks similar female, North West. Box 9092.

TYNESIDE. FEMALE graduate, 26, seeks laid-back intelligent humorous to revolutionise her life. Box 9192.

PANTHEISTIC OLD smoothy female paragon to help pull down the stars now and then. Box 9292.

ATTRACTIVE BRIGHT lady thirty something seeks sincere man. Box 9392.

TALL, HANDSOME, shy, humorous, intelligent man, 31. Likes: travel/pubs/laughs/etc. Friends all couples — fed up playing gooseberry. Seeks interesting, attractive girlfriend, 22-33. London/South. Box 9492.

SHEFFIELD, HAPPILY married man, 49, with positive attitude and some free weekdays seeks female counterpart for exploration. Box 9592.

I'M A SINGLE man, 43, with fair hair, blue eyes and of medium build. Since my wife died I am periodically lonely. I am professionally qualified and I suppose by most standards quite well off. I would like to meet a younger woman, say 30 to 35, as a friend, confidante. Box 9692.

GOODLOOKING, SUCCESSFUL professional male, 30, seeks attractive outgoing female 25-30 to share exciting times together. Main interests are restaurants, theatre, cinema, travel. London. Photo and phone number please. Box 9792.

I HAVE JUST HAD an unhappy love affair completely without the knowledge of the lady concerned. I am a tall slim single professional man 37 not particularly extrovert. Presentable rather than great looking (beard and glasses?). I suppose the existence of a ravishing woman with whom I could fall madly in love would be completely out of the question. Sussex. Photo appreciated. Box 9892.

DIAL 999. Bright attractive athletic independent lady 37 totally hooked on doctors seeks partner for loadsa fun. London/S.E. Box 9992.

MENOPAUSAL MORIBUND mildly mischievous married male must meet magical maiden. Missing memorable moments miserably. Wilts/Oxon. Box 10092.

BLOND MALE (Knightsbridge species) tall easy-going good looking 42 sports car, looking for fun romance and happiness with a lively and lovely young woman. Box 10192.

GRADUATE, 26, attractive, blond, slim, bored with fidelity, seeks like-minded partner (neglected housewife?) 25-40 for fun, uncomplicated daytime dalliance. London. Box 10692.

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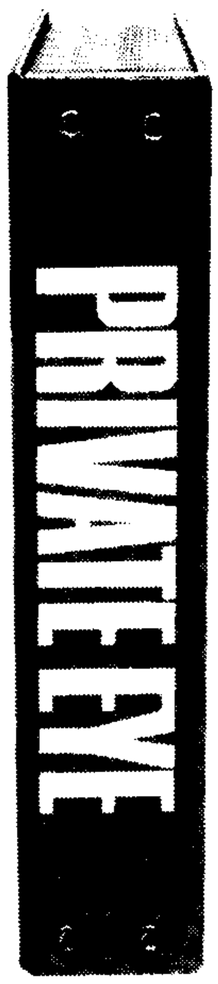

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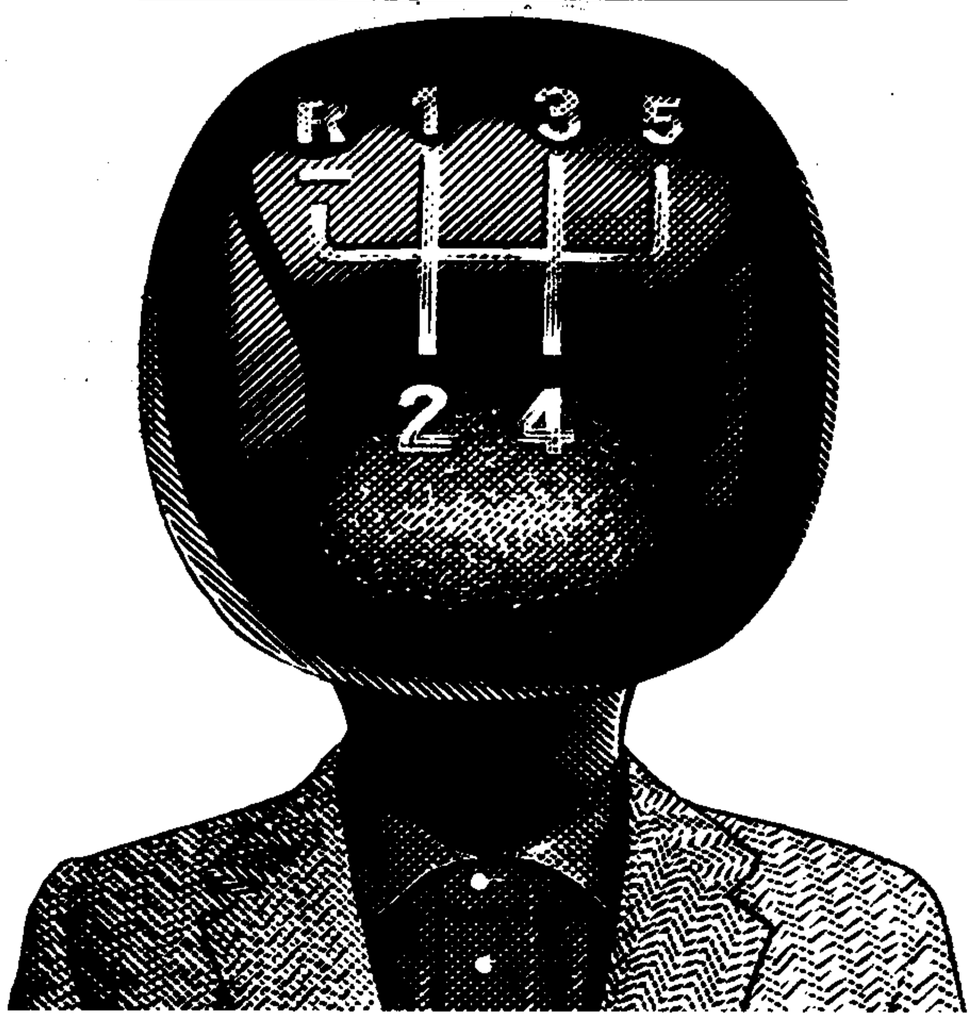

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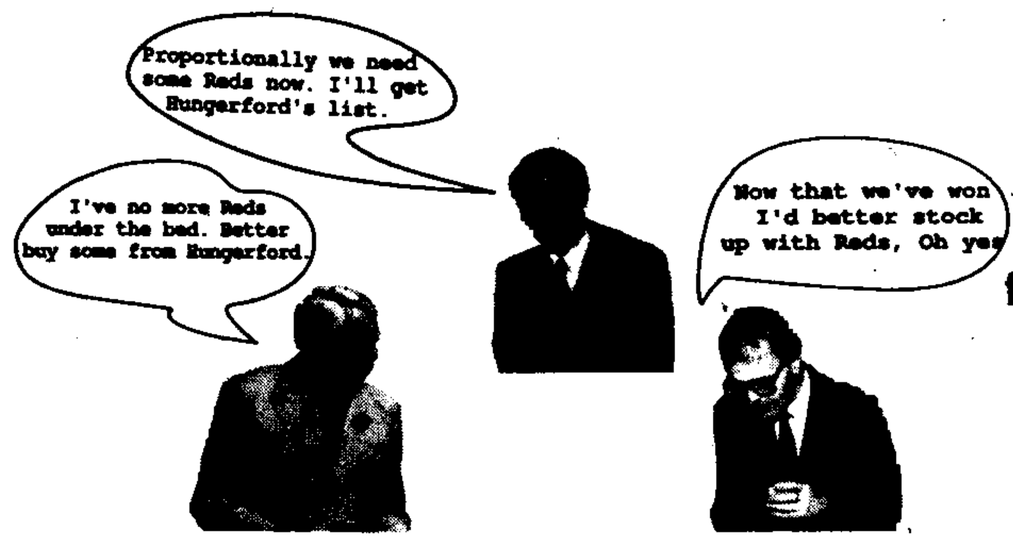
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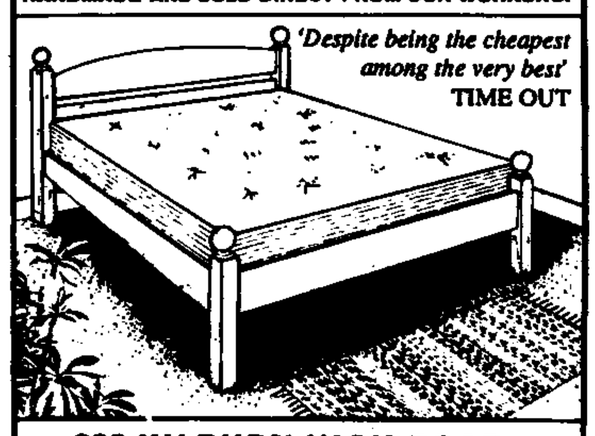

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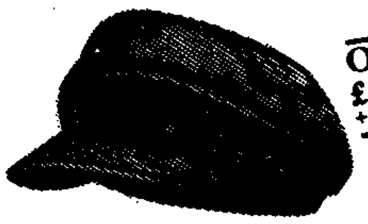

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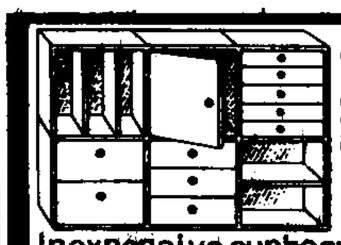

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